

The Spirit of Willingness

Recently, a parishioner described a Parish need. "We need a *spirit of willingness!*" Come to find out, she is absolutely right. Most of the ministries at this Parish have been run by the same people for years, there does not seem to be a plan for engagement, and no one seems to step-up when asked. The Parish seemed lost on where to begin, how to build a "spirit of willingness" amongst Parishioners.

Another way to say "spirit of willingness" might be capacity. Why is this important? How does capacity have anything to do with stewardship? Well, it relates a lot. Frankly, I am always interested in increasing capacity. From human to financial capacity, you can find it in the pews, or at the school's basketball game on Tuesday night, or with the young couple who joined the Parish wanting to get married. Capacity is all around us. When we pursue the effort to cultivate and steward a spirit of willingness, all around the Parish community, we then find leadership disciples.

Leaders become capacity builders and in turn, investors with their resources of time, talent, and treasure.

The more leaders you have as a Parish, the better off the Parish will be. This is not rocket science. It is the domino effect. As you become radically obsessed with invitation and participation, you are engaging people and therefore creating a higher propensity for them to give. Time and Talent lead to treasure, not the other way around.

Remember in order to create a sustainable stewardship model at the Parish, time, talent, and treasure need to be seen through a larger strategic lens: *Leadership, Capacity, and Messaging*. Here are a few ideas to jumpstart your stewardship effort through promoting a "spirit of willingness" during the next 30-60-90 days.

Within 30 days

Leadership: Make sure name tags are worn by all leaders. Always.

Capacity: Start assessing your ministry leadership in terms of time volunteering, age demographics, diversity of time as a Parishioner, etc.

Messaging: Publish a stewardship graphic in the bulletin above the financials you post. This graphic should emphasize time and talent, especially if you regularly publish your financials (Stewardship of Treasure). If you are in need of inspiration or need a graphic sent to you, contact Katie Price kprice@archchicago.org.

Within 60 days

Leadership: Create a goal to have staff or ministry leaders send out one invitation (to participate or learn more about Parish activities) and one thank you note particular to their presence in the Parish.

Capacity: Review the webinar on Stewardship Marketing 101 here: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/1434047214283592194> and work alongside Katie in the Office of Stewardship and Development to help walk you through these new tools.

Messaging: Utilize blogs and other articles that are sent in the Spirit of Stewardship Newsletter in your bulletin and website.

Within 90 days

Leadership: Work with ministry leaders to draft a succession plan/transition process that will welcome, train, and engage diverse groups to step up in leadership roles of programs and ministries.

Capacity: Create and implement a sign-up for ministry leaders to volunteer writing a testimonial on why they volunteer. Once a month, publish one of these stories, which highlight time, talent, and treasure of the leader.

Messaging: Create your Parish Stewardship Mission and Vision statement, then share that vision with Parishioners regularly and alongside all communications channels.