

This year has been an exciting time for Stewardship education in the Archdiocese of Chicago. Here is a look back on 2016, and a look forward to 2017.

When I started at the Archdiocese of Chicago last February/March, I could not have imagined the excitement and momentum for stewardship that I have witnessed. A “renewed energy”, a “can-do-attitude”, and “new inspirational ideas,” are descriptions from Parish staff and parishioners in regards to stewardship. The successful *To Teach Who Christ Is* campaign should energize many of us. However, it intimidates some of us. Sometimes doubt or the fear of donor fatigue starts to set in and we start to question how we will continue the campaign momentum. How do we keep up the generosity and excitement from the TTWCI campaign? What happens if gifts do not get fulfilled? How do we continue to discuss giving without being too overbearing or redundant? These questions tend to stall growth, not inspire growth.

Maybe these are not the right questions to ask at all...how about these questions instead,

- How can we continue to thank and acknowledge the generous givers at our Parish?
- How can we welcome newcomers into our Parish, and provide them the opportunity to share their time, talent, and treasure, not out of obligation but the spirit of generosity toward the TTWCI pledges and the Sunday offertory?
- How can we move forward with encouraging and developing a culture of generosity that is in line with promoting discipleship through sharing time, talent, and treasure with the Parish?

As I look back over the last year, I am so grateful for the relationships that we have built and the stewardship success we have had together. Here is a look at the amazing year we have had working together:

- Monthly webinars, on the topics of Advent stewardship, welcoming parishioners, and acknowledgement strategies
- Monthly *Spirit of Stewardship* newsletter with articles and information valuable to your Parish effort
- In-person consulting visits on stewardship, from explaining the theology of stewardship, to training volunteers
- Three in-person, Parish wide, Stewardship Evenings of Reflection
- Seasonal stewardship graphics, including bulletin inserts and reflections
- Stewardship messaging and yearly content planning, including a 52 week calendar of content ideas in this newsletter
- Stewardship Workshops for each Vicariate, with the highest level of participation in Vicariate IV with over 70 attendees
- Digitized and enhanced the Planned Offertory Program, including graphics, content, and a customized Parish stewardship video
- Successfully raising TTWCI campaign funds over the \$350 million goal

Next year, our effort in Stewardship Education will continue with more programs, strategies, and resources made available to our Parishes. Looking forward to 2017:

- ✓ We will host the first ever *Parish Stewardship Celebration Day and Awards Luncheon* with guest, Cardinal Cupich on April 20, 2017. Parish staff and parishioners will get the opportunity to highlight their Parish and learn from leaders in the field in a unique “Ted Talk” style conference. (What is a “Ted Talk” style, click here for a quick video) [LINK]
- ✓ We will continue our webinar series, covering a variety of topics from acknowledgements, to Lenten stewardship, to Parish planning for the fall.
- ✓ We will host three more in-person Workshops in each Vicariate.
- ✓ We will be continuing to develop a sustainable stewardship plan, in coordination with the Parish Operations, Parish Transformation and Parish Turnaround teams.
- ✓ We will be training individuals who worked alongside you during the TTWCI campaign, to become a resource on stewardship and development services
- ✓ New Planned Giving seminars on topics including wills and states, charitable IRA's, and annuities

I am so excited for this movement of stewardship in the Archdiocese. May you all be blessed with a joy-filled Christmas season!

God bless,

Katie