



At Saint Margaret Parish's first Ministry Fair, parishioners come forward to share their God-given gifts of time and talent.

### Growing in Grace

“Saint Margaret’s Parish in Rumford is experiencing the blessings of becoming more and more a stewardship parish. While each generation over its 122 year history has responded to the biblical call of Baptism to extend the ministry of Christ, our present day response is taking on plenty of new and varied forms and activities.

The parish lay leaders on the Pastoral Council, the Finance Council and the Stewardship Council became excited as we spent a full year exploring Catholic stewardship, its theology, principles and practices. This led us to enter into a strategic planning process where we identified parish strengths, needs and challenges. Soon, many new ministries were formed: Greeters & Hospitality, Evangelization, Bereavement, Ecumenical Affairs, Social Life, Bread of Life Food Pantry, Ongoing Faith Formation and Outreach.

Our first “Ministry Fair” enabled the entire parish to become familiar with expanded opportunities for sharing the gifts of time and talent. Over 250 parishioners signed up on “Commitment Weekend” to offer their services to any of 38 different ways we now have for extending the mission and ministry of Jesus. And Saint Margaret’s has just begun!

Already, parishioners are better understanding that stewardship is all about expressing gratitude to God in many practical, helpful and caring activities and services. Stewardship is revitalizing Saint Margaret’s Parish and School. It is a way of life! Like our Baptism, it will always be challenging us in new ways!”

**Monsignor William J. McCaffrey**  
**Pastor**  
**Saint Margaret Parish in Rumford**

*Is your parish a stewardship parish? Are your fellow parishioners warm and hospitable? Do they recognize and share their many gifts and talents? Are parishioners sitting in the pews committed to be prayerful disciples of Jesus Christ through their active involvement in the life of the parish? Are they consciously grateful for all God's gifts?*



**TIME · TALENT · TREASURE**

**If you would like more information  
about stewardship, please contact:**

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## Growing in Grace



**Plant the  
Stewardship Seed  
in Your Parish**

“Stewardship is about living our faith. Our commitment to stewardship has had an amazing, revitalizing effect on our parish. We have grown from embracing stewardship as a parish way of life, to embracing it as a personal way of life. Stewardship has become what we are about as a community of faith and as the way we respond as individuals to the responsibilities of our faith.

For years our community was comprised of two parishes, together yet apart: a single pastor, one staff and yet two very distinct cultures. When we embraced stewardship at the core of our community, our hearts became more focused on faith and less on the culture and history that made our parishes so different. A oneness began to emerge as we embraced the spirit of stewardship and parishioners started working together with a better understanding of who we are as church and why we are church. The openness and generosity we embrace as a stewardship parish has brought us together as one and made our faith community, and the community around us, stronger and happier.

Of course, most parishes are not facing the challenges we have faced as we grew toward becoming a single faith family. However, I would recommend to all my fellow pastors that they embrace the gift of stewardship as a Spirit-led movement toward a more vibrant, healthy parish whose parishioners are eager to share the gifts of the Spirit and the gifts of time, talent and treasure with the parish and the community to the benefit of all. And I will end as I began: Stewardship is about living our faith.”

**Father Peter J. Gower**  
**Pastor**

**Saint Mary of the Bay Parish in Warren**

*“Let the man with two coats give to him who has none.  
The man who has food should do the same.”*

Luke 3:11



*Father Peter Gower, Pastor of Saint Mary of the Bay Parish in Warren, greets parishioners at the parish's recent ministry fair celebration.*

**Growing in Grace**

“Stewardship captures the imagination of a community in the 21st century ready and willing to live out the Gospel mandate of loving one another as Christ has loved us. What also comes to mind is the never ending connections that stewardship reveals with the parish community reaching out to the sick, the bereaved, the hungry, the poor, the children, the young adults, the elderly, the homebound, the worshipper and the liturgical ministers. What is celebrated is the connective tissue that strengthens community and creates ongoing bonds of deepening relationships.

What happens is that hospitality abounds and a fresh energy explodes which is experienced by the stranger who comes through the door of the parish community. There is a warmth and a welcoming that is palpable and refreshing. And, the best part of it is, the pastor doesn't have to carry the added responsibility of generating new ideas or fresh initiatives. Each ministry manages this on its own.

Of course, there are the challenges and we still have to address them. With over two hundred and fifty volunteers participating, we still have to bridge the gap between the generations. I believe if we

continue to reach out and unceasingly invite, the gap will close because Christ's Gospel, at some moment, will capture a new generation's imagination for discipleship and service.”

**Father Kenneth J. Suibielski**  
**Pastor**  
**Saint Clare Parish in Misquamicut**

*“We brought nothing into this world,  
nor have we the power to take anything out.”*

1 Timothy 6:7

“Looking back to see what could be of help in starting another year, what stands out, once again, is how important and basic stewardship is in having effective programs in the parish. For example, this past year, evangelization and welcoming people back home to our parishes was of uppermost importance. Being a stewardship parish for a number of years, and trying to instill in our people this way of living and thinking, has helped us in many ways; but one way that it did was to help us evangelize our parents and children who were in our Religious Education Program. Although these families are registered and part of the parish, there was need for further evangelization.

Through the efforts of our Religious Education Director, we were able to involve approximately one hundred fifty parents in the teaching of eight to nine hundred children. These children were brought to neighborhood homes where the teacher/parents shared their faith and experiences with the children. The effect was not only the children coming to know more about their faith, but the teacher/parents themselves growing in their faith and becoming more excited about sharing this faith with their children and with others.”

**Father Raymond C. Theroux**  
**Pastor**  
**Saint John Vianney Parish in Cumberland**