

## 2011 Stewardship Talk

Good Evening/Morning/Afternoon, My name is Joe Jones. This is my fourth Stewardship Finance Address. I have served as President of the Parish Finance Commission for the last three years. My term ended at the end of July and I am here today standing in for David Schoeff, the new Finance Commission President, who is away this weekend.

For some, talking/listening about money and Stewardship creates anxious feelings. So I invite you to relax as my recap includes another positive year here at St. Charles.

First, let's look at some of our financial accomplishments.

- We have a balanced budget for the last fiscal year that ended June 30<sup>th</sup>. This marks the 3<sup>rd</sup> year in which we have had the revenues to meet all operating expenses and to fund needed maintenance and improvements.
- We have completed some capital improvements including the school parking lot resurfacing, major air conditioning issues in the church among other projects.
- We also installed a new school play ground with privately donated funds and several fund raisers.
- We have used monies from Rentz Trust as required by the bequest to address a number of capital expenditures for property maintenance and upgrades and to increase the education endowment which funds financial aid for St Charles school students.

We want to thank our St. Charles community for making these and the other accomplishments a reality.

It is a very exciting time as we enter into our 50<sup>th</sup> year here at St. Charles. While we will be celebrating this milestone, we are mindful of the Stewardship resources needed to maintain our vibrant parish community.

- Supporting and growing St Charles School will continue to be our goal. We have been successful in reversing the declining enrollment. To sustain the school requires investment in both faculty and facilities.
- Maintaining and upgrading the facilities at the church and the school is an on-going process. As our facilities approach 50 years of use, replacement rather than maintenance becomes an objective. We were able to replace 45 year old boilers in the school using two years of monies set aside from operating funds.
- Building a capital reserve for major investments as well as to provide a resource for any unplanned emergencies is a must. We need a "rainy day fund" and we do not have one. The Building and Maintenance Committee have identified over \$1,000,000 in projects that must be addressed including roof renewal both at the school and the church, plumbing replacement in the school and repairs to the exterior of the church.

Finally, let me review some details of the current Stewardship Appeal. Each household should have received a letter and brochure this week launching the Stewardship Appeal. In the cover letter and the brochure Fr. Haemmerle made several points that bear repeating.

- Our previous Stewardship Appeal campaign was three years ago. We had serious financial issues at that time and your increased giving to the parish along with the fiscal management which we have discussed enabled us to get to more stable condition.
- The timing for this campaign is mandated by an archdiocese initiative to fund a concurrent campaign in all the parishes. Unlike our previous campaign this iteration is funded by the archdiocese.
- The financial costs to operate and, especially, to maintain the parish and the school continue to increase.
- We need to build a capital reserve to address both periodic maintenance and to provide for emergency requirements.
- Collections have fallen from the levels reached after the previous Stewardship Appeal. In the two years since the prior appeal, total annual collections have fallen by over \$47,000. The Stewardship message for the last two years has been a request to continue your support level. This year we are asking for an increase.

Your response to the Stewardship Appeal is critical to the growth and vitality of your parish. We understand that these are difficult financial times and that some households may not be able to respond but we ask that you please consider increasing your weekly giving. A small incremental offering can make a big difference.

You will note that Stewardship Appeal letter mentions that we are expanding the electronic giving program. This will enable you to make your periodic donations to the parish in the same convenient manner that you handle your other financial responsibilities. Please note your interest in this program on the commitment card and you will receive information on how to set up this process.

A final note on giving with a longer term perspective - We have mentioned the impact of the Rentz Trust donation to the Parish and the school on several occasions. Providing for St Charles in your will is a powerful act of stewardship that will ensure that your parish continues its ministries long into the future.

Please join your fellow parishioners in ensuring the financial stability of St Charles in its 50<sup>th</sup> year and for years to come. Thank you.