



## STEWARDSHIP CORNER

“There are different kinds of spiritual gifts but the same Spirit; there are different forms of service but the same Lord; there are different workings but the same God who produces all of them in everyone.”

1 CORINTHIANS 12:4-6

All of us are blessed, regardless of our own individual circumstances. God has given each of us many gifts. How we use those gifts is our gift back to God. For God’s plan to work, each must do what we are called to do. Guess what? We are not all called to do the same thing! For God’s plan to work you have to do what God is calling you to do and I have to do what God is calling me to do.

## First Holy Communion Class of 2024:

I would like to congratulate all the students who made their First Holy Communion this year. We have now celebrated this wonderful sacrament for all our candidates in the four churches that make up St. John Paul II Pastorate. I would like to take a moment to thank the Directors of Faith Formation and Catechists for the wonderful job they did in preparing these candidates. Thanks to everyone who volunteered during the year to assist in any way with faith formation. May God bless and reward you.

### The Memorare

Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to your protection, implored your help, or sought your intercession was left unaided. Inspired by this confidence, I fly unto you, O Virgin of virgins, my Mother; to thee do I come, before thee I stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but in your mercy, hear and answer me. Amen. *St. Bernard*

## *Membership in a Parish is a Testament of our Faith*

Perhaps one of the perennial questions is: *What really makes one a member of a parish?* Like every organization that we are a part of, there are certain expectations and obligations that reveal our true commitment to that organization. For a Catholic parish, I would reduce it to active participation and stewardship (parish support). This week I will explore the term “active participation.”

An active parishioner is one who faithfully and frequently participates in the sacraments, especially the Mass. He or she sees the Mass as an integral part of life, and as a means of sanctification. An active parishioner understands the treasures that are hidden in the Eucharist. The idea here is that being present and participating is what adds life to a parish. The church is not just the building; it is really people of God, in union with their pastor and the Universal Church, that forms the Church. The Holy Spirit resides not in an empty building, but in each of the members of the Church, especially during the Sacrifice of the Mass. Except for cases of death in a family, illness, old age, immobility, and other unforeseen circumstances, there is really no good reason for excusing oneself from Mass attendance.

Outside of the sacraments, there are other parish activities that require our presence. We show up to these events because we see ourselves as an integral part of the parish community. When we are active parishioners, we want to meet new and old parishioners, share stories, and build a stronger faith community. We seek the common good even when there are no personal gains. We look after the interests of all not just a few or a group of friends. An active parishioner strives to be a part of the solution. They are through their personal faith very flexible people who understand the exigencies of the time. Finally, the active parishioner is a person of deep faith. We will explore the other part of this article that deals with stewardship in the coming weeks.



Happy Pentecost!  
Fr. Paul