



STELLA MARIS PARISH
OUR LADY "STAR OF THE SEA"™

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Dear Fellow Parishioners of Stella Maris Parish,

My silver jubilee is so fresh in my mind. There are three reasons for that. First, my heart is filled with gratitude. Second, I have been taking time to reflect on how good of a steward I have been. Lastly, I have also recommitted myself to being a better steward. What good points for my 2016 stewardship note!

The twenty-five years I have been a priest have gone by fast but have been filled with so many beautiful people, amazing experiences and so much positive spiritual growth. That does not mean that there have not been days when I wanted to throw the towel in and quit. It does mean that I am very grateful because as I said at my celebration, I give God all the credit for all the good that has happened. God has been very good to me personally and professionally. I have been able to help many people while continually becoming more fully the person that God created me to be within his church.

My reflection on the past has revealed to me how much I have not always been a grateful follower of Jesus; a good steward of what God has given me or a joyful sharer of the gifts that the Holy Spirit has planted within me. My heart has not always been in the right place. Often I have been more concerned with what I think, want or expect than what God seeks from me as a merciful, competent and thoughtful servant. I need to continue to improve my prayer both personally and communally because I am never where I want or need to be. I can always be better at reflecting the goodness of God. The gifts and talents that I have been given are often wasted. I can be very selfish with my financial resources.

Lastly, I commit myself to improving as a disciple of Jesus. A disciple leaves behind what is keeping him/her from following and gives himself as unreservedly to the Lord as possible. I am very imperfect with that but hopefully improving. On top of the ways I already mentioned that I need to improve, I will commit myself to being more present to God and the people of the parish which is not always easy. I also commit myself to giving \$2/week more financially (\$41), as I do every year. Increasing my commitment every year is essential to me because God always increases his commitment to me, the needs of the world are greater and the ability to meet those needs is more difficult with rising costs and cultural shifts

I hope I can count on the gratitude in your heart to inspire you to review your stewardship commitment and become a better disciple. You can show that by returning the pledge form enclosed with your heartfelt promise of support for our parish. We know it is difficult to remember to do everything so follow up calls will be made because the parish needs everyone's participation. As our parish focuses on discipleship, not only helping ourselves to be better disciples of Jesus but also helping others to become disciples, we need the resources which make that possible. We need not only your financial contribution but your commitment to live out the gospel, grow in your faith and do whatever you can to utilize your gifts and talents to help Jesus reach out with the Father's love in the Holy Spirit. I am confident your gratitude to God and commitment to giving back as God has given to you will motivate you to do your part as a parishioner. If there is anything we can do for you or if there is any question you have for us or suggestion you can make to help us, we would appreciate it. Let us know. Thanks again. Best wishes and prayers.

In Christ's love,

Fr. Dave Ruby, Pastor