

**A DISCIPLE'S RESPONSE...LIVING AS A CHRISTIAN**

**Be Not Afraid Fall Stewardship Conference**

86 disciples were in attendance for the much anticipated Be Not Afraid Stewardship Retreat held November 13th and 14th right here at our Mission Hall. Special guest speaker, Fr. Gary Kastl, flew in from Tulsa to share a special message of how living the stewardship way of life can richly enhance one's personal relationship with God. He's seen it transform the lives of many within the three parishes he's served as pastor.

Following a delicious dinner of baked chicken and fish on Friday night, Fr. Kastl captivated the audience with his first talk entitled "God is Love". In it, he shared what he referred to as his "4:00 Moment"...that is, the very moment God made His presence known to him as a ten year old boy. He and his grandmother walked into a church during Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. As they approached the altar, he noticed many Native Americans lying face down on the ground in adoration. His knees buckled and he immediately fell down and broke into tears. He was overwhelmed with the feeling of love. That day began his journey to the priesthood.



**Stewards of the Faith**



Hi, my name is Sue Bashynski. I became a member of SKD and a Catholic when I went through RCIA back in 1998. I'd rather not write my bio by telling you all what keeps me busy, but I'd like to share why I chose to become Catholic and what it is that has kept me Catholic for the past 17 years.

Honestly, I chose to convert to Catholicism simply to get married. I remained Catholic because of family, and really to please others. I didn't understand my faith. That's not to say that the RCIA program didn't teach me. It certainly did. I, like so many, just didn't find it all that important. I complained that I didn't really feel all that welcome and that people were looking at me funny. I had all the excuses. I cantored, and really enjoyed the praise I received for sharing my voice with others as though it was some sort of a performance. I hate to say it, but I just really didn't dig church, but at my husband's persistence, I went. Every Sunday. After awhile I decided to get more active. I joined the Liturgy Committee which I eventually chaired for 10 years. I began to realize that getting involved meant so much more than just being busy. I was serving God, and I was ENJOYING it! I started to get to know my parish family and I felt welcome and invited! I realized that I could not blame the negativity I felt on anyone but me. I didn't feel welcomed because I didn't want to be welcome! Once I changed my mindset, got involved, and accepted Jesus as my Lord and Savior—putting HIM first, I came to understand my faith and to LOVE my faith! Now you can find me in church several times a week, and in about a year I'll be graduating from Cardinal Stritch University with a degree in Religious Studies. I plan on ministering as a chaplain either in a prison or hospital setting—or where ever God leads me.

*Scripture for thought: Isiah 40:3* *How are you preparing yourself??*

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**Parish Mission:**  
**Praise God, Love People,  
Equip Disciples to Trans-  
form our Community.**



### Quotables

*“Do all the good you can.  
By all the means you can.  
In all the ways you can. In  
all the places you can. At  
all the times you can. To  
all the people you can. As  
long as ever you can.”  
— John Wesley*

## ***A DISCIPLE’S RESPONSE...LIVING AS A CHRISTIAN STEWARD***

### **Be Not Afraid Fall Stewardship Conference (con’t)**

After a glorious concelebrated Mass on Saturday morning, we enjoyed three more talks entitled “God Calls and Equips His Disciples”, “To Be a Christian Steward” and “Stewards of the Church”. Each talk was followed by personal reflection and small group discussion.

The imagery used throughout the retreat was inspired by The Holy Spirit and Fr. Kastl’s words touched everyone in the room. Saturday’s talks were captured on video and will be made available online. We encourage you to email us at: stewardship@stkatharinedrexelbd.org for more information.

We are so blessed to have had this experience and look forward to planning similar events in the future.

### ***Stewards of the Faith (con’t)***

I think the most precious gift that I’ve received through all of this is the gift of giving. The joy I receive from comforting a widow, congratulating a family on the baptism of their child, or seeing a child that I taught in RE coming to church on a regular basis with their family—there is no greater joy than that. Knowing that through my giving lives have been changed—maybe just a little bit, but they’ve been changed. And that’s one of the greatest joys of stewardship—Giving of one’s self so that God becomes touchable to others. If you’re not feeling welcome or just don’t seem to understand your faith, maybe God is calling you to experience it in a whole new way.

### **An Advent Family Prayer**

During Advent, we not only prepare ourselves to celebrate the birth of Jesus, but we also check in to see if we are doing all the things that will keep us ready to receive Jesus when he comes again. As a family, recommit yourselves to daily prayer together, talking about your faith and what it means to you to prepare for the coming of our Savior Jesus. Pray together that through this Advent season your family will be more prepared to receive Jesus when he comes again.

**God of Love,  
Your son, Jesus, is your greatest gift to us.  
He is a sign of your love.  
Help us walk in that love during the weeks of Advent,  
As we wait and prepare for his coming.  
We pray in the name of Jesus, our Savior.  
Amen.**