



THE LOURDES WORD

SPRING 2026 :
STEWARDSHIP OF
TIME AND TALENT
PART 2



OUR LADY OF
LOURDES
CATHOLIC PARISH

PARISH MISSION
STATEMENT: WE,
THE FAITH
COMMUNITY OF
OUR LADY OF
LOURDES PARISH,
STRIVE TO LIVE,
SHARE AND BE
CHRIST IN ALL WE
DO.

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This doesn't require an envelope or a committee. This needs a compassionate heart to approach this child of God quietly and ask, 'Are you alright? How can I help?'



A Parish Called to Serve

By Darin Richart

In 1961, during his inaugural address, John F. Kennedy challenged Americans to “ask not what your country can do for you – ask what you can do for your country.” No doubt inspired by his Catholic roots, Kennedy’s words inspired an entire generation into committing themselves to the stewardship of embracing public service, dedicating themselves to ensuring a brighter future, and committing to the principles of improving life for all mankind.

At OLL, we have had a renewed interest in stewardship with the retirement of Father Rick, the arrival of Father Jude, and the election of Pope Leo XVI. Pope Leo himself has stated a commitment to stewardship saying in September 2025 that, “Everything has been given to us as a gift by the Lord, who has entrusted this to our care, our freedom, and our responsibility.” We have many opportunities here at OLL to continue the traditions of stewardship and service which are a hallmark of our Catholic faith.

Stewardship, as recognized by Catholic theology, is that a person’s time, talent, treasure, and creation are gifts from God, and we are to be grateful and generous with those gifts.

Since I have had the pleasure of serving on OLL’s Parish Council and School Commission, as well as several other committees at OLL, I can attest that we are abundantly blessed as a parish. The duty now falls to us to cultivate, protect, and foster those gifts. Too many times, we think of stewardship as only in a financial sense. This misses the big picture of stewardship.

I have long advocated to create a Stewardship Council at OLL to ensure stewardship cultivation and assist with annual stewardship initiatives. The hope would be for this Stewardship Council to work with, but serve independently from, the Parish Council and Finance Committee. This independence ensures equal emphasis is given to all aspects of stewardship and the spirituality which accompanies it, while preventing sole focus on financial aspects. This council would be made up of representatives from various primary committees, such as the Finance Committee, the school, etc., as stewardship should touch every aspect of our lives as a parish.

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"OUR LIFE IS MADE OF TIME AND TIME IS GOD'S GIFT... AMONG THE MANY THINGS TO DO IN OUR DAILY ROUTINE, ONE OF THE PRIORITIES SHOULD BE REMINDING OURSELVES OF OUR CREATOR WHO ALLOWS US TO LIVE, WHO LOVES US, WHO ACCOMPANIES US ON OUR JOURNEY." — POPE FRANCIS

A Parish Called to Serve (Continued)

For those on a tight budget, when it comes to parish activities, there is a place for you to serve at OLL. Whether you can volunteer in a classroom at the school, at our annual Fall Festival, as an usher at Mass, or as part of our religious education program, there are many opportunities to participate at OLL which would fit even the busiest schedule.

Serving as a volunteer in your parish can have many additional benefits. For the last twenty one years, I have served various parishes as a cantor. The personal relationships I have built have been fulfilling and long lasting. They are my friends and family.

They are the people I see every holiday. They provided free music at my wedding. They were the first to offer condolences and to take off work for funerals to ensure the Mass had beautiful music.

I hope, and wish, every OLL parishioner to find the same spirit of community as I have. Getting involved as a volunteer being a good steward of the gifts God has provided us is an excellent way to start.



Artwork by Jim Lynch

Finding Christ in Community

By Ben and Anna Kompar

As a family with two boys under the age of two, our time feels incredibly precious right now. Our mornings start early, and the days are full. Although we are stretched thin, my wife and I have felt poured into when we give of our time at Our Lady of Lourdes. The parish is such a gift to our family, so giving back felt less like an obligation and more like an opportunity to be joyfully generous.

I serve as the secretary for the Parish Council, and my wife is part of the Faith Formation committee. Together we help lead the young adult ministry. Our son also attends daycare at Our Little Lyon's.

Each of these ministries has blessed us with opportunities to encounter Christ through our peers. By participating in these ministries, we feel we are an active part of the parish, and not just visitors.

Stewardship is not only about money. For us, giving our time and our energy is what we can offer. Our Lady of Lourdes gives so much to our family in terms of stability, faith, and community. Serving in return feels like a natural response. Even in a busy season, it is something we are called to do, and through it we feel even more connected to our parish home.



The Church Parking Lot Test

By Jeff Fleak

One thing I've noticed about parish life is that stewardship often happens long before Mass begins.

It happens when someone notices a new family standing alone and says hello. It happens when someone picks up a piece of trash in the parking lot because, "someone should do that." It happens when a volunteer shows up early to make coffee, a catechist prepares a lesson, or a parishioner quietly prays for someone who is struggling.

Most of us don't wake up in the morning thinking, "Today I'm going to be a great steward." We just do the small things that help our parish feel like home.

Our celebration of Fr. Jude's 10th Ordination Anniversary was a beautiful reminder of that spirit. Long before people arrived, volunteers were preparing, organizing, welcoming, and serving. Throughout the celebration, parishioners greeted old friends, welcomed new faces, shared stories, and came together as a community. What could have been simply an event became something much more meaningful because so many people chose to share their time and gifts.

That's what stewardship looks like. It's rarely one grand gesture. It's a thousand small acts of faithfulness that add up over time. Most of them go unnoticed, but they matter.

They create a parish where people feel welcomed, supported, and loved. They create a community where faith grows, friendships are formed, and people encounter Christ through one another.

Perhaps that's one of the greatest gifts of parish life. We are reminded that we don't walk this journey of faith alone. Through the generosity, kindness, and service of others, we experience God's presence in ways both big and small.

Thank you for the many ways you help make Our Lady of Lourdes a place where people feel at home.

And if you're wondering where you fit in or how you can help, don't be afraid to take that first step. Some of the most meaningful experiences in parish life begin with a simple "yes."



"GREAT OPPORTUNITIES TO HELP OTHERS SELDOM COME, BUT SMALL ONES
SURROUND US EVERY DAY." — SALLY KOCH

A Scout's Prayer

"Dear Heavenly Father, may I never tire of the joy of helping other people or look the other way when someone is in need. Grant that I may do my best today and strive to do even better tomorrow. Teach me that duty is a friend and help me face even the most disagreeable task cheerfully. Amen." [1]



The OLL Boy Scout Troop members share their time and talents by helping move rocks from the peace garden to be repurposed in other gardens. Through their hard work and willingness to serve, they help care for our parish grounds and provide a wonderful example of stewardship in action.





The beautiful flower gardens around our church are a visible reminder of stewardship in action. Through the gift of their time and care, the Gardening Ministry has created a welcoming and prayerful space that reflects the beauty of God's creation and the love our parish has for its community.





Models of Stewardship

By Andrea Fleak

What do you think of when you hear the word “stewardship?” Growing up, when I heard the word “stewardship” at church, it usually referred to treasure. Now, when I consider the other two T’s—Time and Talent—I see stewardship as an invitation. God has given each of us unique abilities and gifts to use within the Church. When we give our time and talents, we welcome God into our lives and become living witnesses who reflect Christ to others.

When I reflect on stewardship and living our faith, Mary and Joseph come to mind. Their ministry was hidden in the everyday, ordinary things of life, and yet every aspect of their life was focused on doing the will of God and caring for Jesus. Joseph was a carpenter who used his skills to provide for his family, serving as a model for how we use our gifts to support God’s family. There is little in the scripture about either of them, yet what we have shows us that they accepted God’s call to service with humility. In their quiet faithfulness, Mary and Joseph show us that true stewardship is lived not in grand moments, but in daily trust and loving obedience.

Mary and Joseph’s quiet faithfulness continues in the Church today. I remember Charlie, the sacristan from the parish where I grew up, who lived a life of service. As an altar server then, I spent much time alongside Charlie. No matter what Mass I was serving, Charlie was always there, always preparing the items for Mass, often before others had even arrived. When I had questions, Charlie would answer them.

When I needed to light the incense during a Funeral or Holy day, Charlie was there to help. When the new wooden altar arrived a few hours before a funeral, Charlie was there polishing it. Over time, Charlie taught a fellow server and me how to light the incense, prepare the vessels for Mass, and fold the pall after a funeral. When he wasn’t at church on Saturday mornings, Charlie could be found volunteering at the SVdP warehouse dock, faithfully serving his community. Through his actions, Charlie’s life became a quiet witness to his faith in God.

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“IT IS NO USE WALKING ANYWHERE TO PREACH UNLESS OUR WALKING IS OUR PREACHING.” -
ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI

Models of Stewardship (continued)

When I look around our parish, I see stewardship lived out in many ways. Our SVdP chapter brings the Gospel to life by serving those in need in our community, and the Bereavement Ministry offers more than meals but community and comfort to grieving families. Those involved in faith formation, youth ministry, CYO, Scouts, and our school help shape and pass on the faith to the next generation, just as Mary and Joseph did for Jesus. The Gardening Ministry, the Men's Club, and many others care for our buildings and grounds, while

those who decorate the church and help with liturgical and music ministries, like Charlie once did, contribute to the prayer of the parish. Together, through our ordinary acts of service, our parish shows Christ's presence to one another and the community. Stewardship is not simply a word—it is the quiet, faithful “yes” we choose each day, following the humble example of Mary, Joseph, and Charlie.



Artwork by Bill Bakemeyer

In Stitches

By Paula Roessler

The greatest gift you can give someone is your TIME because when you give your time, you are giving a portion of your life, and that is the best gift of all.

TALENT is something that you've been given by God, and some people find it early in life, and some people sadly never do. The best way of living with a talent is to share it with others.

We here at Our Lady of Lourdes Church have had a Ministry for about four years called "In Stitches."

We are a group of ladies that gathered together for the purpose of making items for others. Some of our recipients have been the children at BIRTHLINE, residents at ENVIVE and LITTLE SISTERS of the POOR residents.

One of our most precious gifts was for Father Rick's retirement, a wall hanging, and it was made with material called Lourdes (pictured).

What a treasure ❤️

Our group consist of 14 members from the parish, and we have come together quite nicely, confidently knowing our gifts were needed and happily created. Yearly, for our Fall Festival, we have had an item(s) to raffle for donations to benefit Lourdes.

Is it TIME you step forward to share a TALENT and witness it become a TREASURE??



"WHAT DOES LOVE LOOK LIKE? IT HAS THE HANDS TO HELP OTHERS. IT HAS THE FEET TO HASTEN TO THE POOR AND NEEDY. IT HAS EYES TO SEE MISERY AND WANT. IT HAS THE EARS TO HEAR THE SIGHS AND SORROWS OF MEN. THAT IS WHAT LOVE LOOKS LIKE." - ST. AUGUSTINE

Christ Has No Body

*By St. Teresa of Avila
Submitted by Stephenie Paquette*

Christ has no body but yours,
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,
Yours are the eyes with which he looks
Compassion on this world,
Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good,
Yours are the hands, with which he blesses all the world.
Yours are the hands, yours are the feet,
Yours are the eyes, you are his body.
Christ has no body now but yours,
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,
Yours are the eyes with which he looks
compassion on this world.
Christ has no body now on earth but yours.



On Our Doorstep

By Bruce Oertel

Typically, we think of stewardship as the offering plate or one of many institutional organizations within the church that support God's mission on earth. We have a very active group of parishioners at Our Lady of Lourdes that invests significant time and talent through St. Vincent de Paul, the Fall Festival, school functions, and the unseen work of making our parish operate properly. These are important examples of stewardship. We are also called to quiet, unseen acts of stewardship that only God sees. Some things don't require an envelope or a committee. They require a Christ-centered heart.

Sometimes, God's call for stewardship is a few bags of odds and ends that constitute the sum total of someone's earthly belongings residing on the very steps of our own church. This doesn't require an envelope or a committee. This needs a compassionate heart to quietly approach this child of God and ask, "Are you alright?" "How can I help?" Stewardship starts at a personal level. Are you that person?



Artwork by Jim Lynch

"LOVE IS NOT JUST A WORD; IT IS AN ACT OF GIVING. IT IS A LIFELONG DEDICATION TO THE SERVICE OF OTHERS IN THE CHURCH AND IN THE WORLD." — ST. TERESA OF CALCUTTA

Good and gracious God,
I thank You for the beauty of the earth
and all creation. Help me to always hear
the call to be a good steward of Your
gifts, the caretaker of all You have
entrusted to us on earth. Let me always
recognize, cherish and enjoy the
goodness in all of creation. Teach me
reverence for every person and all living
things. O God, help me to use Your gifts
wisely and share them generously.
Whisper in my heart the reminder that I
am but a temporary guardian of Your
abundance; I am called to pass Your
gifts on to the next generation. Let all I
do be a reflection of Your love and care.
Amen.



The Lourdes Word is an attempt for us, the followers of Christ, to reflect publicly on our faith journey. Each edition has a specific theme. Contained in this issue are reflections on “Stewardship of Time and Talent.” We would like to thank all those who contributed to this edition.

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