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# Models of Stewardship The St. John Apostle & Evangelist Parish Pastoral Council

In the fall of 2014, St. John Apostle and Evangelist Catholic Church committed to becoming a stewardship, spirit-led parish. As a result, 12 commissions were created, and each of the more than 50 ministries was assigned to a specific commission. From each commission, a ministry leader was selected as a chairperson based upon his or her skills and strengths. These commission heads, plus some others, were organized into a Parish Pastoral Council. The chair of this group is parishioner Cory Lindo, who has been a member of the parish for almost 20 years.

"When Msgr. John asked me to join the Parish Pastoral Council (PPC), I was honored and very excited to participate and be a part of the team that would help lead St. John Apostle and Evangelist Parish into a new standard of evangelization and stewardship," Cory says. "I told Msgr. John that when God asks someone to do something, it is very hard to say 'no.' For me saying 'yes' was very easy and doing so helped me become a better steward giving more of my time and talent."

Canon Law provides for the formation of Parish Pastoral Councils in Canon 536, which states, "In every parish of a diocese, a Pastoral Council shall be established. The pastor presides over the Pastoral Council. The Pastoral Council is to be composed of members of the congregation, and they are charged to assist with the promotion of pastoral action in the parish."



*Left to Right: Bill Castro, Msgr. John, Cory Lindo, Angela Bolan, Deb Zedalis, Mike Browning, and Cescei Nakamura  
Not in the photo: Duane and Wanya Ogata, John and Cassandra Durham, Les Hunkele, Rich Guillory, Carl Caliboso, and Nick Calzada*

*continued on back cover*

# After I'm Gone: Planned Giving

*"Our days glide by: death is at our door." – St. Francis de Sales, The Devout Life*

Stewardship is a way of life. Its practice is the only true path of Christian living, which demands active service and charitable giving.

To be considered a way of life, however, stewardship must be practiced from now *until the moment of death*. The call to give of our time, talent and treasure back to God in gratitude does not cease – there is no break, no pause, no respite. The race doesn't end until the finish line.

One way to answer the call of stewardship right up until your last breath is to include your local parish or favorite charity as a benefactor in your will or revocable trust.

This may be a concept you've never considered. When creating a will, people often think of family and their alma mater – the local parish is generally overlooked as a beneficiary. However, the work of the Church has been greatly assisted by many generous gifts in the wills of its members, and your personal contribution can make a difference in the future of the Church.

Keep in mind that more than 50 percent of adults die each year without a valid will. And without a will, the laws of the state decide the disposition of one's estate – no charitable giving is part of this distribution.

Take the time, therefore, to write a will and designate the parish or your favorite charity as a beneficiary. A bequest is a wonderful opportunity to express your commitment to the work of the Church right up to the moment of death. It is easy to arrange, does not affect your assets during life, and is completely revocable.

There are several ways to include the church in your will – as a fixed monetary amount, a specific item or designated property, a percentage of your estate, or a residual bequest (stating that after all bequests are granted, the residual is left to the Church).

Although the end of our earthly existence isn't pleasant to ponder, it remains an important part of our lives. Death itself is, in a sense, the culmination of the Christian life, and our call to live as stewards continues even up until this moment. St. Philip Neri once said, "The best way to prepare for death is to spend every day of life as though it were the last. Think of the end of worldly honor, wealth and pleasure, and ask yourself: And then? And then?"

May we all maintain a healthy awareness of the finite nature of our earthly existence and give back to God with generous hearts.



# Stewardship: A Positive Way to Live

Dear Parishioners,

There is something about the month of August that is glorious. Summer is still in full force – the lazy, hazy days are upon us, and some still have vacations on the horizon. And, yet, we can also see the end of this wonderful season drawing closer – our vacations may already be over, and we may be sadly anticipating the end of this relaxing time, with back-to-school and a return to the busyness of life just around the corner.

We are at that point in the year when things are coming to an end and things are beginning all at once. However, isn't that the way it always is? The Russian playwright and short-story writer Anton Chekhov once said, "People don't notice whether it is winter or summer when they are happy." There is certainly truth to that statement. You might say it is a stewardship statement.

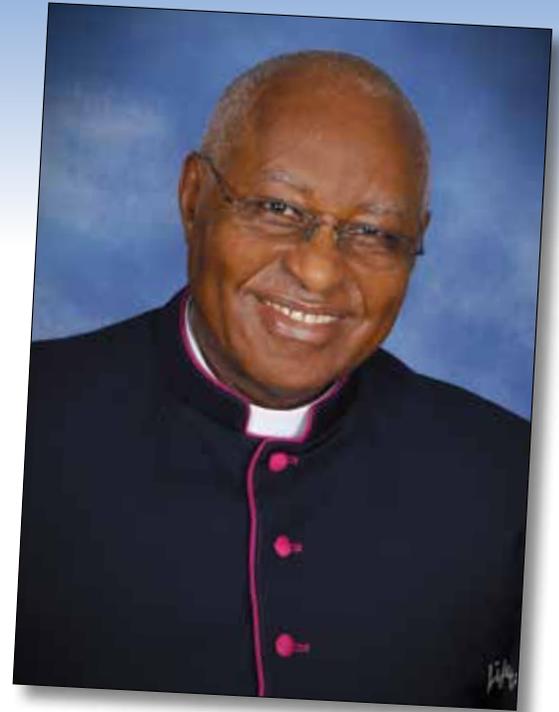
I am sure you are wondering how to make the connection between Chekhov's quote and stewardship, but the connection is found quite simply in the word "happy." I once heard someone say in a presentation about stewardship that people who

live stewardship as a way of life are almost always happy. There is a reason for that.

Stewardship is a positive way to live. It means feeling grateful and centering your thoughts on gratitude. In other words, your focus is on the good things in life, not the bad. That does not mean you have perfect health or that all is ideal in your family, that you always sleep well at night, or that you enjoy everything that happens to you or around you.

However, it does mean that when the good happens, you thank God. You recognize that good and are filled with feelings of joy and gratitude. You and I know people like that, don't we? We know people who always seem filled with joy, regardless of what may be happening to them or around them personally. To me, these kinds of people are stewardship people – the kind of people we all need to strive to be.

No doubt, you have heard that living a life of stewardship means living with an "attitude of gratitude." That is not easy, for you or for me.



Let us vow to try to be like that nonetheless. As we watch our summer season dwindle away and the busier time of year begins again, let us concentrate on how God has blessed us. If we do that, I truly believe that we can be those people Chekhov described. If we are happy, it will not matter what time of year it is.

I am grateful for you, your support, your prayers, and – most of all – your presence in my life. Thank you and God bless you.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Msgr. John S. Mbinda  
Pastor

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# Kipapa Backpack Project *Meet*

It's hard to turn on the TV, open a newspaper or scroll through your newsfeed on Facebook without realizing there's a problem. All over the world, people try to survive in poverty. It's not uncommon to see the face of a young child who suffers from a lack of adequate nutrition. And sometimes, you don't have to look any further than your own neighborhood if you have willing eyes and a loving heart.

In December 2015, St. John Apostle and Evangelist Church worked with the Hawaii Alliance for Community Based Economic Development (HACBED) in order to better understand the needs of our own community.

“What we learned from the HACBED analysis is that in Mililani, one in three children under 12 are at or below the poverty level. At Kipapa Elementary, just two blocks from our church, 53 percent of children receive free or reduced meals,” says Deb Zedalis, who leads our Social Ministry Commission (SMC).

In January 2016 at a meeting of the SMC, our pastor, Msgr. John Mbinda said, “Here we are sending money to Nigeria and Cameroon, South Sudan and Molokai, and two blocks from our church, we have Lazarus at our door. What are we going to do about this?” recalls Deb, of the early inspiration for the project that would soon come to be known as ‘Kipapa Kokua.’” At the same meeting Monsignor prayerfully reminded us of our many blessings and encouraged us not to approach our community's needs from a position of scarcity and fear but to look at opportunities to help from our abundance and joy.

Deb's first prayer was to find volunteers with a passion for Kipapa and very shortly God answered that prayer. Cora Buenconsejo and Teri Ishikawa are retired Kipapa teachers who are passionate about the students they served at Kipapa and full of accolades about the school, principal and administrators, teachers, volunteers and students. Cora and Teri knew the need and enthusiastically agreed to help. With their help, a meeting was set up with Kipapa Principal, Corinne Yogi, and School Counselor, Dr. Silvia Koch to discuss the school's needs.

Quickly it became clear that, while many local schools and other organizations receive assistance during



*Parishioners work together with the administration at Kipapa Elementary School to find the best ways to serve the needs of the children. (Row 1, from left) Erlinda Nishimura, Cora Buenconsejo, Deb Zedalis, and Seanalei Nishimura. (Row 2) Robert Nishimura, Susie Marin, Teri Ishikawa, Kings Kalohelani (Kipapa Summer School Director) and Corinne Yogi (Kipapa Elementary School Principal).*

Thanksgiving and Christmas, they are often forgotten the rest of the year.

“They were very interested in a program that could consistently help and yet be flexible enough to meet multiple needs such as food, clothing, school supplies or mentorship. They were so grateful for any assistance that it was truly humbling” said Deb.

Kipapa Kokua began earlier this summer, filling backpacks for 56 children, who participated in a three-week summer school program. Each backpack was filled with breakfast, lunch, and a snack, for each day of the weekend.

Deb tells the story of a little girl, who came with her grandparents, to help pack the backpacks for the students, and the joy she had about serving those in need.

“I thought about the future of our church, grandparents with their granddaughter, children helping children. This little

# ting Lazarus at our Door

girl was so excited building these backpacks, knowing they're going to her classmates," says Deb, "As she continues to grow, she will have a heart for service."

In July Kipapa Kokua hosted a school supply drive that gave parents an opportunity to "shop" for things their children need as they begin the school year. The school supply drive gave church volunteers an opportunity to see, face-to-face and heart-to-heart, those they are serving. They hope to have a children's clothing drive and a slipper drive, as well as continuing to fill backpacks with food for children and families as the need arises.

Parishioners are also needed to volunteer as "mentors" for students, to help them clean out their backpack, organize their assignments, or just serve as a "big sister or brother." Deb emphasizes that this personal aspect of the ministry is one of the most important. "Corinne Yogi highlights this program as one that will warm your heart. They currently have 20 children in the program but could serve more as they have a waiting list. What a way to make a difference in a child's life – both academically and personally."

"We want to really help people but allow them to maintain their dignity," Deb says. "The school principal spoke to us of the need to help but to protect the family's confidentiality and

dignity; to see this not as a handout, but an opportunity to be involved with the children. It's time and heart. Not just money, or buying food, but taking it another step, taking it deeper, knowing and loving the people we are serving."

She invites parishioners to look around and ask how they can help serve those in need, around them.

"We really want to inspire a revolution. If you know there's a need and you see this need, you may not be able to meet the whole need, but (you can) begin to address the need. Let's stay focused on seeing the needs and then meeting the needs," Deb says.

Along with Msgr. John, she encourages others to be generous and confident, prayerfully and faithfully knowing that God always provides.

"Is not God good? Has He not given us all this and more? Why would we doubt our God? If it's His work, it will succeed. In this Year of Mercy, this is a perfect time to ask for and receive God's help in reaching out to those who could use a helping hand."

If you would like to become involved with Kipapa Kokua, please contact Deb Zedalis: 808-348-2973 or [dzedalis@hawaii.rr.com](mailto:dzedalis@hawaii.rr.com).



Volunteers (from left) Erlinda and Robert Nishimura, Bill Castro, Cora Buenconsejo, Teri Ishikawa and Susie Marin work to fill backpacks for students at Kipapa Elementary School.

*"We want to really help people but allow them to maintain their dignity. Not just a handout, but also be involved with the children. It's time and heart. Not just money, or buying food, but taking it another step, taking it deeper, knowing and loving the people we are serving."*

*— Deb Zedalis, Social Ministry Commission*

## The Assumption of Mary: A Time to Celebrate!

Can a pile of bones really be that exciting?

Every year, tens of thousands of pilgrims visit St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, eager to glimpse the spot in which the alleged bones of St. Peter, our first pope, remain to this day.

The relics of saints have been venerated throughout the ages in every corner of the world – yet, the bones of the very first Christian, the Mystical Rose, are nowhere to be found.

When it comes to the day, manner or year of the Blessed Virgin Mary's death, nothing is certain. No account is given in Scripture. The Church turns instead to Tradition for an answer.

Since the birth of the Church, no Marian relics have ever been venerated – nor can they ever be – because her body was *assumed*, or taken up, into heaven. There exist, therefore, no remains of the Blessed Virgin's body on this earth. She lives, right now, body and soul, in heavenly glory.

Although the particular dogma of the Assumption cannot be found in the writings of Scripture, if we look at many other writings by the early Christians, it is clear that the Church has always held this dogma to be true. Even more, though there is no statement of fact in the Bible itself that Mary was assumed body and soul, the truths that we do know about Mary from Scripture simply serve to back up the reality that she was assumed into heaven. She gave herself wholly to the Lord and followed His will for her life, perfectly, to the end.

The Assumption of Mary reveals that the promises of the Lord – including the resurrection of the body – were



fulfilled in Mary. She shared most intimately in the life, death and resurrection of her Son, and was free from original sin and its effects – including corruption of the body at death.

Therefore, it was no surprise when, in 1950, Pope Pius XII declared infallibly the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary as a dogma of the Catholic faith with these words: “The Immaculate Mother of God, the ever Virgin Mary, having completed the course of her earthly life, was assumed body and soul into heavenly glory” (*Munificentissimus Deus*, 44).

The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin is observed on the liturgical calendar as a solemnity – of higher importance than a feast. On Aug. 15, this wonderful celebration is accompanied by great hope in the resurrection of the body and everlasting union

with God in heaven.

In the words of Pope Benedict XVI during his homily Mass on the Solemnity of the Assumption of Mary in 2006: “Mary is ‘blessed’ because – totally, in body and soul and forever – she became the Lord’s dwelling place. If this is true, Mary does not merely invite our admiration and veneration, but she guides us, shows us the way of life, shows us how we can become blessed, how to find the path of happiness.”

Alongside Catholics throughout the country, be sure to celebrate the Solemnity of the Assumption on Aug. 15. This is a declared Holy Day of Obligation in some dioceses and a great liturgical feast.

# “We All Need to Come Together as a Community to Share Our Love for One Another”

## *The One Community Celebration*

Saturday, Aug. 13, is a special day for our parish community and for our entire Mililani Ohana. Yes, we have been a faith community for these 45 years – and we have also been an intricate part of Mililani during that time. Therefore, this is a day for our entire community to celebrate, and that is what we plan to do!

“During a Pastoral Council retreat some years ago, we were asked, ‘If SJAE in Mililani ceased to exist, who would know about it?’” says Mike Browning, who is co-chairing the event for the parish along with Cesceli Nakamura, Angela Bolan, and Cory Lindo. “I reflect on this often and struggle with whether my dentist or fast food server knows where SJAE is or what they do. The 45th Anniversary gives us a chance to celebrate what we do in the community, and this occasion of the ‘One Community Celebration’ provides us a venue to celebrate with the entire community. Vendors, neighbors, other churches alike are welcomed to come and share their story and journey with us on this special day. Likewise, SJAE will

share what we have done for others and thank the entire community for supporting us either directly or indirectly. We will begin at 10 a.m. and conclude at 3 p.m.”

As Mike points out, it will be a busy and full day, including participation from our many ministries, entertainment – every hour on the hour – plenty of great food, fun for community members of all ages, tours of our church, raffles, balloon artists, and more.

The entertainment schedule is as follows:

10-10:40 a.m. — Hula Group: Na Wahine O Ka Hula Mai Ka Puuwai, Kumu: Candy Pollack  
 11-11:40 a.m. — Children’s Choir  
 12-12:40 p.m. — Jazz Ensemble  
 1-1:40 p.m. — St. John’s Liturgical Movement Group (with kids & adults)  
 2-2:40 p.m. — Rock/Hawaiian Ensemble

Our many ministries will be on hand at booths and tables. We would encourage people to come and visit them to learn more about what these groups do for

our parish and for the entire Mililani community. There are three key reasons to take the time to visit them:

1. To learn what they do and how they might be able to serve you in your life
2. To thank them. They are what make us the strong parish we are, and they deserve our gratitude
3. Maybe, just maybe, you will see and find a place where you can contribute and give of your time and talent.

Mike emphasizes the importance of this celebration in our community.

“We all need to come together as a community to share our love for one another,” he says. “We express our thanks to one another and say, ‘I’m here for you, if you ever need me.’ Let us celebrate what is right in this world, and what is ‘right’ is right here in Mililani. It starts in our schools and neighborhoods, our banks and service establishments. And it most certainly begins with all faiths coming together on a special day – not just SJAE’s 45th Anniversary, but a One Community Celebration, which is Mililani Town’s special day.”



*“We all need to come together as a community to share our love for one another. We express our thanks to one another and say, ‘I’m here for you, if you ever need me.’ Let us celebrate what is right in this world, and what is ‘right’ is right here in Mililani. It starts in our schools and neighborhoods, our banks and service establishments. And it most certainly begins with all faiths coming together on a special day – not just SJAE’s 45th Anniversary, but a One Community Celebration, which is Mililani Town’s special day.” – Mike Browning*

For more information about our One Community Celebration, please call 808-623-3332 ext. 100.



# The St. John Apostle & Evangelist Parish Pastoral Council *continued from front cover*

Cory makes it clear the Council is advisory in nature to the pastor. Catholic Canon Law makes that equally clear by stating, “A parish is a definite community of the Christian faithful established on a stable basis within a particular church; the pastoral care of the parish is entrusted to a pastor as its own shepherd under the authority of the diocesan bishop.” (Canon 515).

The PPC meets on the first Tuesday of every quarter. Meetings begin with our stewardship prayer, a scripture reading, a scripture sharing, old business discussion, individual reports from each commission chair, introduction of new business items and a concluding prayer. The reporting procedure is very specific – on the Friday before each PPC meeting, each commission chair sends a report to the PPC recorder who, in turn, sends out the reports to all members of the PPC. The report begins with an update of the progress made on the three action items set by the commission chair during the prior PPC meeting, moves on to describe any assistance required from other PPC commission chairs or their ministries and ends with a description of the three action items to be addressed by their commission during the next three months and details any assistance required.

“In addition, the commission chairs have weekly or monthly meetings with each of their ministries in between the quarterly PPC meetings,” Cory says. “These ministry meetings are the source of the action items reported on by the commission chairs.”

Currently there are 19 members of the PPC, a number that includes the pastor and the parochial vicar. The PPC has been empowered to assure that each ministry within their responsibility is striving toward the implementation of the SJA&E five-year and beyond plan, bringing the action items of the plan to fruition and achieving the goals and objectives of the plan.

Cory points to the members of the council as models of what stewardship involves.

“Everyone on the PPC has given a great deal of time and talent to SJA&E and should be an example for the rest of the parishioners who do have time and talent but may need some guidance in becoming a part of one or more ministries,” Cory says. “This is how we become better stewards for SJA&E. The PPC would like to see every parishioner become involved in at least one ministry.”

Cory encourages everyone to consider a way to be involved.

“Try it; you’ll love it,” he says. “Start with one hour a week of your time. Investigate a ministry you might have an interest in and speak with someone within that ministry. Participation will make you want to do more.”

For more information on how to become engaged in ministries, contact the parish office at 808-623-3332. For information about the PPC, call Cory Lindo at 808-271-4428 or e-mail him at [corylindo@hawaiiantel.net](mailto:corylindo@hawaiiantel.net).

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*“When Msgr. John asked me to join the Parish Pastoral Council, I was honored and very excited to participate and be a part of the team that would help lead St. John Apostle and Evangelist into a new standard of evangelization and stewardship. I told Msgr. John that when God asks someone to do something, it is very hard to say ‘no.’ For me saying ‘yes’ was very easy and doing so helped me become a better steward giving more of my time and talent.”*

*— Pastoral Council Chair Cory Lindo*

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