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Parking Lot Ministry Fostering the Pillar of Hospitality in Our Parish Community

We never really know the full effect of our words and actions. Something as simple as a smile or a friendly greeting can dramatically change a person’s life for the better. A casual invitation can draw a person into the community, making them feel like they belong for the first time. This is why hospitality remains an essential ingredient to stewardship, helping us live up to Christ’s words, “For I was...a stranger and you welcomed me” (Matthew 25:35).

St. John Apostle & Evangelist’s Parking Lot Ministry was designed to help us as a parish family continue spreading the love of Christ to each person who enters our parish grounds. From the moment they open their car door, we want each parishioner and guest to feel welcomed and greeted by our parish aloha.

“The Parking Lot Ministry is part of the Aloha Hospitality Ministry and was created to help share St. John Apostle & Evangelist Church’s aloha and to help everyone feel welcomed from the moment they enter our parking lot, all the way until after Mass when they leave,” says Cesceli Nakamura, the ministry coordinator.

Each Sunday, members of the Parking Lot Ministry can be found, rain or shine, cheerfully greeting members as they



Parking Lot Ministry volunteers (from left) Lita Padilla and Liz Perry greet a parishioner before a recent Mass.



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The Spirituality of Stewardship

Following in the Footsteps of the Saints

The word “stewardship” has long carried with it the association of a financial obligation to the Church. Many believe that stewardship means “giving my time and money to the Church in support of its work, lest it is unable to survive and thrive.”

Indeed, stewardship does often require sacrifice of some kind. But the reality is that stewardship is not simply a guilt-laden obligation, or a “bill.” Nor is stewardship in any way comparable to a tax payment or a charitable networking opportunity at work. Instead, stewardship is a spiritual way of life – an active response to Christ’s invitation to unreservedly “come after me, and I will make you fishers of men” (Mt 4:19).

Stewardship is about how we respond to God’s call to discipleship, and there are many different ways we can respond to His call. We can, in turn, live the stewardship way of life simply by making small choices in our daily lives, under normal, everyday circumstances.

Nowhere in Christian history is there a more archetypal example of the variety of ways we can respond to God’s call, than in the lives of the saints. The saints represent a wide cross-section of individuals – old and young, rich and poor – living in different times in human history. Some were called to the religious life, focusing their lives on spirituality and material simplicity through prayer, and helping to form the tenets of faith. Others were individuals focused on charitable outreach, dedicating their whole lives to feeding the hungry and clothing the naked. Still, others faced great adversity and challenges to their faith, and ultimately suffered death and martyrdom in loyalty to Christ and His Church.

However, the commonality that all of these individuals share is that they responded to God’s call to

discipleship by utilizing the unique talents that God had given them. They did so in ways that were conducive to their individual personalities, and that actively influenced the circumstances presented to them in their respective days and times. Contemplative spirituality, charitable giving, great courage – all of these roads have led to canonization and, ultimately, eternal life with God in His glory. We are all called to do the same.

As the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops states in its pastoral letter on stewardship, *Stewardship: A Disciple’s Response*, “The challenge, then, is to understand our role – our vocation – and to respond generously to this call from God” (43). When thinking about the spirituality of stewardship, take some time to discern your talents, and how you can best respond to God’s call by naturally and effectively using the gifts He has given you. If you are a gregarious person, this might mean reaching out to a co-worker you don’t know very well, thus helping to create a hospitable work environment. If you are an individual who is often “on the go,” perhaps this means praying the Rosary while you are driving from place to place. If you have recently experienced a financial windfall or unexpected increase in income, this might mean sponsoring a little league team in your community by paying for their uniforms.

God has provided many roads to the Kingdom of Heaven, and in the saints, we see examples of the many roads that have been taken. Choosing the one that is best for us means that we can live stewardship as a spiritual practice and a way of life, and that we may answer His call to discipleship.

Save Room on Your Busy Schedules for Stewardship

Dear Parishioners,

I don't know about you, but I still get a surge of adrenalin as the beginning of September approaches. Even though I'm no longer in school, I feel a sense of anticipation when I see the shelves filled with brand-new notebooks, composition books, and all the assorted items students use. I'm aware once again of the great hopes, exciting dreams, and good intentions that a new school year holds.

Even for those parishioners not directly involved in school, September marks new beginnings. Labor Day traditionally marks the unofficial end of the summer vacation season, and our calendars may reflect that. Many of you have calendars a lot like mine — they're full year-round with appointments and obligations. But even for us, things get busier in September as various organizations that took a break during summer begin their regular round of meetings again.

Nevertheless, I have a request for you as you fill up your fall schedules. First thing, please put in some time to share the talents God has given you. As you are aware, as Christian disciples — as stewards — we are called to return to God a portion of the Time, Talent, and Treasure He has entrusted to us. We should make our commitments to God when we begin our planning, so that we don't offer Him just the scraps of time and energy left over after everything else.

Make this September the month you make a commitment to sing in the choir, including attending rehearsals. Or begin working with our parish religious education in one way or another. Or decide to launder altar linens once a month. Or volunteer to help in the parish office one morning a week. Or help care for the parish grounds. Or join the Knights of Columbus. Or join a social service ministry. Or... well, you get the idea.

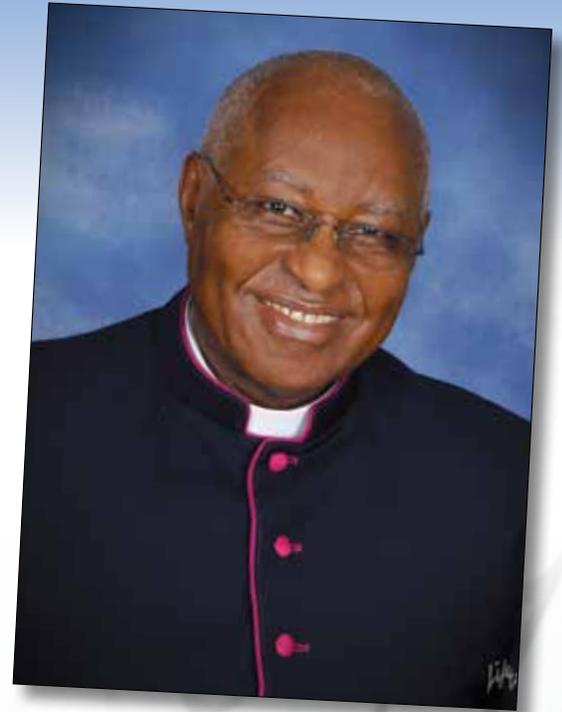
There are many ministries and groups within the parish where you can serve, and you'll find that you receive even as you give. Hardly anyone in the parish can't find at least one activity in which they can participate and which fits their schedule. If **you** aren't involved, make this September the month to change that.

Thinking about commitments, some people say they don't have Time for prayer. Again, it's a matter of priorities, and I challenge any one of you to demonstrate to me that you can't pray at least one Our Father, one Hail Mary, and one Glory Be during the course of the day. That's at least a beginning.

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Msgr. John S. Mbinda
Pastor



Seminar Offers Opportunity to Better Know the Holy Spirit

The Holy Trinity – three Persons, one God. The Father – sometimes we picture Him a wise old man, the Creator, a loving Father. Jesus — He is often the easiest to relate to since He took on flesh and humanity at the Incarnation, He is our Savior. Our Brother.

But when it comes to the third Person of the Trinity —the Holy Spirit — we often feel overwhelmed with the mystery of the Divine.

Tongues of fire, a dove, wind – all these images of the Holy Spirit can leave us in awe, yet don't always make us feel particularly connected. Nonetheless, the Holy Spirit is a divine Person, who invites us to develop a personal relationship with God.

Victoria Achaval first experienced the presence of the Holy Spirit in her life 26 years ago and has been an active member of the Catholic Charismatic Community. After moving to Mililani in 2003, she joined the Charismatic Prayer Group at St. John Apostle and Evangelist. She currently serves as one of the leaders of the prayer group.

“It is a blessing and a privilege for Christians to develop a personal relationship with God and to learn more about the Holy Spirit,” Victoria Says. “The goal is to grow in loving God and be open to receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit.”

Each year, the Charismatic Prayer Group invites fellow parishioners to join them for the Life in the Spirit Seminar, an opportunity to learn more about the Holy Spirit and deepen their relationship with Him. This year's seminar is Sept. 29 and 30.

The weekend “retreat” begins on a Friday evening at St. John's, and continues all day Saturday. Meals and snacks are all provided and there is no cost to attend. The seminar includes teachings, past participants sharing their stories, and time for small-group discussion or reflection.

Victoria hopes that the seminar will be an opportunity for participants to be aware of the presence of the Holy Spirit in their



The core members of the Charismatic Prayer Group invite other parishioners to learn more about a relationship with the Holy Spirit at the annual Life in the Spirit seminar.

lives, and receive the spiritual gifts that He desires to give them.

“We want people to be aware that the Lord has gifts available that will help each of us to grow spiritually, and to help build up the body of Christ,” she says, explaining that the pinnacle of the retreat includes people praying in small groups for people to receive the gifts that the Holy Spirit wants to give them. “It's powerful and beautiful and wonderful.”

Victoria has found that a relationship with the Holy Spirit has impacted her prayer and appreciation of Scripture, as well as how she lives her faith in the everyday.

“Over the years, the Holy Spirit's wisdom within me has taught me to listen, discern and obey the will of God for my life. I can testify that it is possible to experience peace even in the midst of the trials and tribulations I face because I believe that the Holy Spirit's grace is sufficient for me.”

“The Bible can be very complex, but if we have the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we can digest it and connect it to our everyday lives,” she adds.

The seminar also helps to empower people to share their faith and be a blessing to those around them.

“It's important because we are on Earth for a mission, and not just to love God, but also to love our neighbors and to evangelize,” Victoria says. “It helps us to share God's love.”

Victoria encourages her fellow parishioners to consider attending this year's Life in the Spirit Seminar.

“You're a child of God and you have the Gifts of the Holy Spirit,” she says. “God wants us to grow in faith, in love, in forgiveness, in hope, in generosity, healing our mind, body and spirit – God wants all of that for us, and we just have to say ‘yes.’ The Holy Spirit has gifts available to all of us. Just by saying ‘yes’ to the weekend, the Holy Spirit will start to plant a seed and it will grow.”

Registration for the Life in the Spirit Seminar on Sept. 29-30 will be available after all Masses beginning the weekend of Sept. 9-10. For more info, please contact Frank and Nita Hing at 808-625-6227.



By greeting parishioners the moment they set foot on parish ground, Parking Lot Ministry volunteers work to spread the spirit of hospitality to all.

To help ensure that the spirit of hospitality continues to grow within our parish, the Parking Lot Ministry is currently seeking additional volunteers for all Masses. If you are interested in helping, please contact Cesceci Nakamura at 808-226-4325.

Parking Lot Ministry *continued from front cover*

exit their cars and enter the church. This is done with the single purpose of spreading Christ's love to others, drawing them into the Church family.

"We have to treat our neighbors with love," says ministry volunteer Lita Padilla. "That was Christ's command and this is a small way that I can do that. I'm showing love to my fellow parishioners and I believe that we help make them feel good by doing this. It helps make them want to come into the Church and praise the Lord, setting the tone for their worship experience."

Lita has been a member of the Parking Lot Ministry since its founding in 2015, and faithfully serves at the 7 a.m. Mass, along with Evelyn Quinata and Liz Perry. They are there ready to welcome parishioners, no matter the weather conditions. Yet, rather than being burdensome, Lita finds her service a great joy as she sees the spirit of hospitality spread amongst our parish family.

"It makes me feel joyful when I'm there spreading joy to others," Lita says. "I believe in giving my service to my fellow parishioners and the importance of welcoming others to God's house."



Each Sunday, Parking Lot Ministry members are found, rain or shine, cheerfully greeting parishioners and spreading Christ's love.



Evelyn Quinata of the Parking Lot Ministry welcomes everyone at the beginning of Mass with an ALOHA!

"We have to treat our neighbors with love. That was Christ's command and this is a small way that I can do that. I'm showing love to my fellow parishioners and I believe that we help make them feel good by doing this. It helps make them want to come into the Church and praise the Lord, setting the tone for their worship experience." – Lita Padilla

A Significant Moment in Our Prayer: *The Presentation of the Gifts*

Occasionally, you might hear someone jokingly refer to “halftime” during Mass – the interval following the Prayers of the Faithful, as the Liturgy of the Eucharist begins. It can be easy, even tempting, to zone out as you sit, waiting for the collection basket to make its way to your pew.

But if you pay attention, you’ll have the opportunity to enter into something deeper – a significant moment in our prayer.

It’s mentioned by St. Justin Martyr, one of the earliest Christian writers, when describing the Mass in the second century, “Bread is brought up and wine and water...”

This practice, of people bringing up the gifts, has been part of our Catholic tradition from the very beginning. Although we might think of this action as being merely practical, in reality, it serves a much deeper spiritual purpose.

Each Sunday Mass, someone is chosen, whether an usher, or another member of the parish, to bring forward “the gifts” – bread, wine, and in many cases, the collection of money that has been gathered moments before, from the generosity of the congregation. These gifts not only symbolize, but also in reality, are the work of human hands. The bread and wine are fruit of God’s creation, which, through the effort of human hands, are made into the gifts that we present to the Lord.

Certainly, the collection that is presented to the priest also serves to represent the work and sacrifices of the previous week. Sharing our monetary

“treasures” is one of the ways that we embrace stewardship. It’s an opportunity to generously give back to the Lord, from the fruit of our work.

In his book *What Happens At Mass*, Fr. Jeremy Driscoll, OSB explains, “...We should not think of the collection of money at this point as some sort of banal, dirty but necessary affair. Money is our work. Money is hours of our lives. And now we give it away, we sacrifice it, for the work of the Church.”

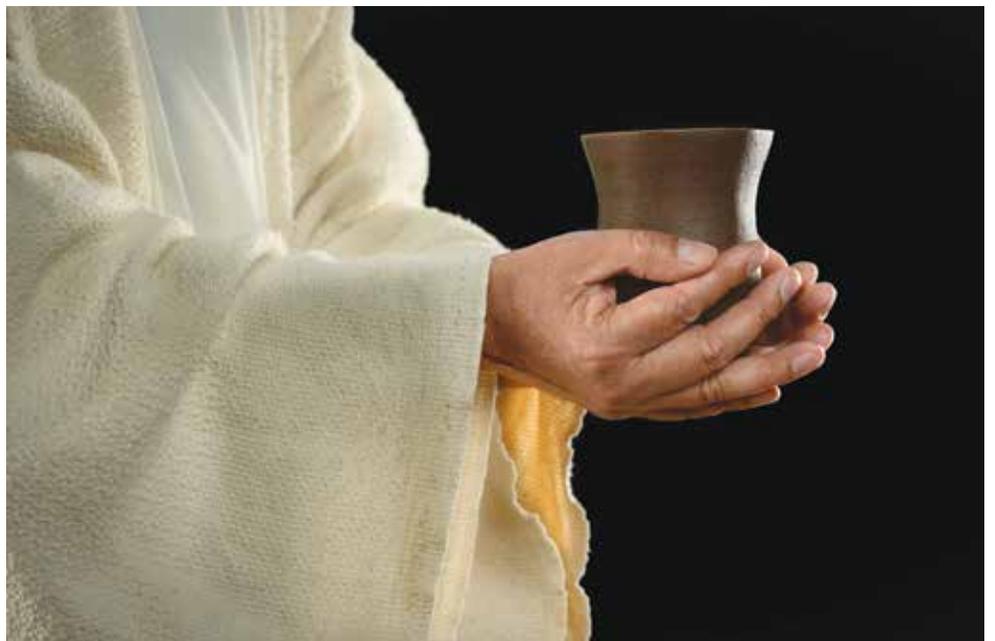
In his letter to the Romans, St. Paul instructs Christians to “offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God” (Romans 12:1).

The physical act of carrying the gifts forward to the priest is meant to serve as a tangible reminder of the fact that we are all called to stewardship. We are all called to present to God our lives – our work, our talents, the struggles and

victories of the past week – as an offering and gift to God.

Those who bring forward the gifts each week have the privilege and responsibility of remembering what their action represents – that we are called to give generously of our time, talent and treasure to God, who gives us His very self, at Mass. And for those sitting in the pews, tempted to “check out” for a few minutes, seeing the gifts being brought forward should serve as a powerful reminder to offer our lives back to God, through serving and honoring Him.

So next week, don’t just sit back and wait for the “halftime show.” Come to Mass a few minutes early and approach an usher to ask if you and/or your family may bring up the gifts that week. Don’t be surprised if you start to notice a change in your heart and a desire to be even more generous with God in the coming week!



St. John Apostle & Evangelist Church

Financial Report for Period Ending June 30, 2017

	Previous Fiscal Year Actual 7/1/2015-06/30/2016	PERIOD ENDING 7/1/2016-06/30/2017		Current Fiscal Year Budget 7/1/2016-6/30/2017
		Actual	Budget	
RECEIPTS				
Sunday Collection	916,650	957,975	948,500	948,500
Candle Sales	27,986	32,092	30,000	30,000
Social Ministries	23,278	9,733	15,000	15,000
Religious Education	9,015	16,119	10,100	10,100
Occasional Offering/Donations/Other Income	116,948	31,182	42,920	42,920
Fundraising Revenue Subject to GET	2,412	13,467	11,000	11,000
Interest Income	6,756	5,817	6,100	6,100
Net Assets Released to Operations	26,755	6,571	-	-
TOTAL RECEIPTS	1,129,800	1,072,956	1,063,620	1,063,620
DISBURSEMENTS				
General Operations	443,829	477,797	426,979	426,979
Capital Campaign	-	74,177	-	-
Diocesan Assessment	133,344	130,174	133,201	133,201
Parish Council	-	17,395	20,000	20,000
Rectory	40,722	45,912	45,532	45,532
Property/Facilities	96,062	96,963	91,636	91,636
Liturgy	105,772	83,179	88,992	88,992
Religious Education	123,388	117,506	127,785	127,785
Social Ministry	46,826	50,228	69,900	69,900
Youth Ministry	31,490	18,366	8,345	8,345
Stewardship Development	49,121	48,527	51,250	51,250
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS	1,070,554	1,160,224	1,063,620	1,063,620
NET OPERATING INCOME (LOSS)	59,246	(87,268)	-	-
TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED DONATIONS				
Stewardship Development	22,406	3,980	-	-
Building Equipment Maintenance	71,167	64,806	-	-
OCC Building Fund Pledges and Collection	22,170	1,003,257	-	-
Subtotal of Current Year Donations	115,743	1,072,043	-	-
Less: Expenses (Net Assets Released to Operation)	(26,755)	(6,571)	-	-
Less: Capital (Net Assets Released to Building)		(99,399)	-	-
TEMP. RESTRICTED DONATIONS - NET	88,988	966,073	-	-
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	148,234	878,805	-	-

In fulfillment of our stewardship virtues of accountability and transparency, the Parish Finance Council presents the above Year to Date Report

Notes:

- 1.) Temporarily restricted donations include grants from Weinberg and Building Funds . Accounting guidelines encourage nonprofits to recognize donations when pledged/received and to release restrictions when expenses are incurred.
- 2.) Change in Net Assets does not include non-cash income - change in value in Land & Building.
- 3.) Please direct questions about this report to the Finance Council.

St. John's "Safety Around the Home" Presentation *Ensuring Our Fellow Parishioners Are Safe*

Of the Four Pillars of Parish Stewardship, the Pillar of Service encourages us to put our faith into action by ministering to the needs of others, from the youngest members of our community to our beloved seniors.

Mary Lau-Miki, PT DPT, a lifelong Catholic and a St. John Apostle & Evangelist parishioner since 1991, is looking forward to hosting the parish's first "Safety Around the Home" presentation.

"I am honored to present this event for our seniors," says Mary, the Director at Mililani Physical Therapy, LLC. "It is an informational presentation for our seniors that will serve our fellow parishioners and ensure that they are safe."

"Safety Around the Home" is an interactive presentation that will take place at St. John's on Sept. 16 from 9 to 10 a.m. Though Mary has made similar presentations at other locations in our community, this is the first time the parish will host the event.

"It will be a fun presentation, not just a lecture," Mary says. "I use a PowerPoint, and throughout the presentation, I demonstrate the various things that can be used to be secure around the home."

Mary keeps the audience engaged and the discussion enlivened by



The Staff at Mililani Physical Therapy, LLC

demonstrating the actual items she discusses in her presentation, from flashlights to emergency whistles to different reachers that can help parishioners from losing their balance or injuring their backs.

She also discusses everyday activities like walking around the neighborhood to stay active and wearing reflective gear for safety.

"There are giveaways throughout the presentation," Mary says. "I want them to go away with not only knowledge, but also with actual things they can use around the home."

Mary also discusses where parishioners can purchase these various items in our community and their respective costs.

For Mary, this event will be a dynamic way to communicate with our seniors about keeping them safe with their normal daily activities.

"It is an important event for the faith community, because the helpful hints will minimize risk for falls within the home and the neighborhood."

All are encouraged to attend the presentation to hear about practical ways of staying safe at home and in the community.

"It is a very informative, enjoyable and easy-to-understand presentation. Everyone will receive a goody bag for attending, and there will be lucky numbers and giveaways throughout the presentation."

For more information about St. John's Safety Around the Home event, please contact Mary Lau-Miki at 808-623-6244.