

Generous Culture of Stewardship

Goal

By 2014, the people of the Diocese of Niagara are recognized for the way their giving reflects God's generosity, their honesty and faithful care of every gift, and the manner in which their resources are used effectively to God's glory. They have established a high level of trust, and know that parishes working together are stronger together than alone.

Biblical Reference: John 6:1-13 (feeding 5000) - God takes every act of generosity, large or small, and magnifies it to God's purposes beyond what we could ever ask or imagine.

Indicators (Concrete Evidence)

- We understand that Stewardship is about our relationship with God, a core Christian practice that is rooted in Scripture, and a way of life. It is not about paying the bills or keeping the church afloat.
- We demonstrate generosity in all we do, all we give, and how we care for creation, the environment, ourselves and each other.
- We have established a broad consensus among diocesan leadership, clergy, and laity that generosity is a shared goal and a leading indicator of spirituality
- Our ministries at all levels (parishes, Diocese, and the National Church) are adequately and fairly resourced
- Our Diocesan and parish budgets realistically reflect anticipated revenue and support investment in resources consistent with living our Vision.
- Our governance, committees, and processes embody and support our Vision

Indicators (Concrete Evidence) cont.

- We understand the joy and freedom of living our baptismal vows, we can articulate our faith in Christ and the difference it makes in our lives with others, and we inspire them to support and be a part of mission and ministry.
- We offer regular and consistent words of thanks to God as generosity is recognized and celebrated throughout the year.
- Our decision-making and communications inspire and foster mutual trust and are consistent with our values and mission
- We replace talk of survival, viability and conflict about money with conversations about mission, potential, opportunity, and transparency
- Our focus at Diocesan Synod is about our vision and mission and our discernment of God's preferred future for Niagara.
- We further develop the "Ten Simple Things" workshop; develop a glossary of terms about stewardship and other web resources for use in parishes to keep the stewardship message bubbling all year long and to support parish efforts.
- We share our resources and expertise using language appropriate to a variety of parish contexts to foster conversation about how generosity is developed as part of daily life.

WORK IN PROGRESS

Generous Culture of Stewardship *(continued)*

Diocesan Missional Objectives

- The “parish viability tool” is revised, renamed, and is known as an effective resource for parishes to self-evaluate, consider what God is calling them to be, and find courage to make faithful decisions about the future. Resources and training are available in its use.
- A Narrative Budget for living God’s mission and our ministries becomes the standard presentation at Synod.
- The Diocesan line-item budget is re-structured under mission headings and maintained as a document for internal administration.
- The Hands Across Niagara Appeal fosters new ideas, partnerships, mission, education, outreach and helps to establish new growth in underserved areas.
- The Diocese models cost-effective collaboration with new partnerships in community and ecumenical friends in mission and administration.
- We all share good news, ideas, self-evaluation, community building and strategy-setting positively and collaboratively through our website and other media.
- The Diocese offers website and social media templates to parishes where needed.
- Diocesan prayers and stories on the theme of stewardship and mission become a part of diocesan liturgy.
- Generosity of time, talent and treasure, and a sustainable relationship with creation are celebrated through liturgical resources.

Parish Missional Objectives

- A narrative budget celebrating each parish’s story and place in God’s mission becomes the standard at annual vestry meetings, conveying how the parish joyfully gives and lives that mission.
- All parishes use Diocesan resources in intentional, year-round stewardship work
- All clergy are well informed and knowledgeable about parish offerings
- All parishes seek new partnerships, cooperative purchasing, and community/ecumenical cooperation in the administration and care of their physical assets and operations.
- Faithful cooperation and success stories are celebrated in the Diocese and inspire others.
- Energy once spent worrying about money is now intentionally invested in prayer, compassion for others, and care of every gift of God, and giving life, health and breath to our communities.

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