

## Section 2:

# Ministry Assessment and Future Vision

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*“At the start of this process it is important to lay out a comprehensive view of stewardship—a vision of a sharing, generous, accountable way of life rooted in Christian discipleship—which people can take to heart and apply to the circumstances of their lives.”*

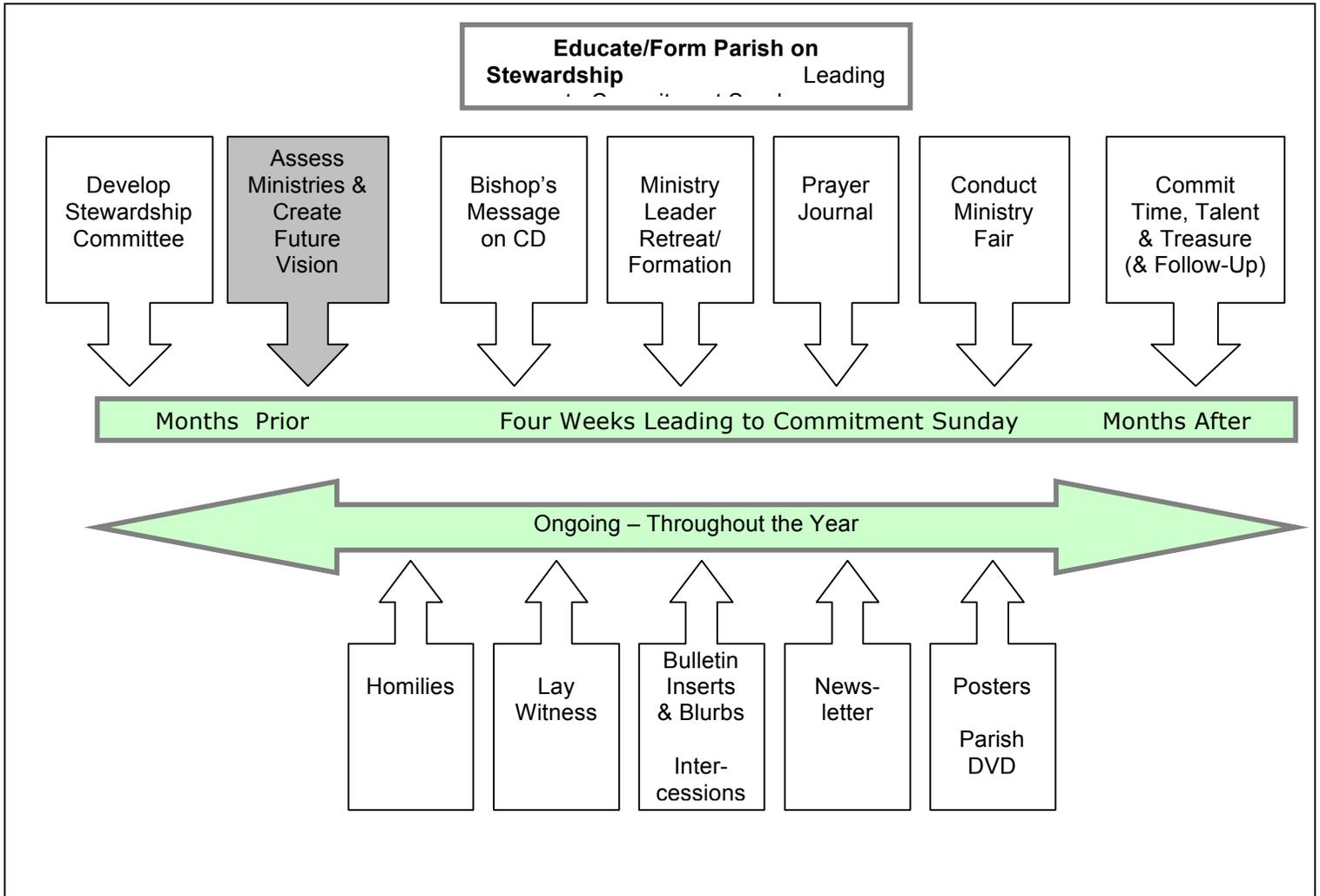
~Stewardship: A Disciple’s Response, U.S. Bishops’ Pastoral Letter on Stewardship



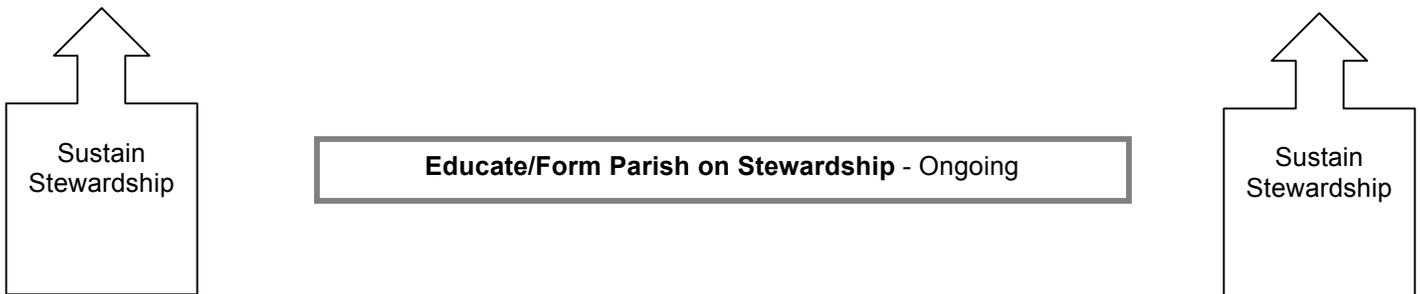
**GOD'S GIFTS** *for* **GOD'S PEOPLE**  
—time, talent and treasure—



# Stewardship Roadmap



The Stewardship Manual provides a roadmap to implementing and sustaining a



successful Stewardship process in a parish. The roadmap is divided into 6 sections:

1. Developing a Stewardship Committee
2. Assessing Ministries and Creating a Future Vision
3. Educating and Forming the Parish on Stewardship
4. Conducting the Ministry Fair

5. Committing Time, Talent, and Treasure
6. Sustaining Stewardship

The Manual contains 4 additional sections containing materials for:

- Appendix A – Discernment of Gifts
- Appendix B – Children’s Stewardship
- Appendix C – *A Steward’s Prayer and Reflection Journal*
- Appendix D – *Sunday Homilies – Forming Communities in the Spirit of Stewardship*

Each section provides an overview, suggested steps for implementation, lessons learned, tools, sample materials, and external resources that can be used to initiate and sustain Stewardship in a parish. This section (highlighted in gray above) addresses **Assessing Ministries and Creating Future Vision.**

# Ministry Assessment and Future Vision

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## Ministry Assessment and Future Vision Overview

Ministry Assessment is a tool to help evaluate parish life. It will be a valuable resource to:

- Discover the gifts and talents of parishioners
- Assess ministries; those needed and those that may no longer be needed
- Define plans for the future based on parishioners' needs and interests
- Empower the community in realizing the Stewardship efforts that are already occurring and how they can grow
- Provide opportunities to promote and educate Stewardship as a way of life.

### ***Examining the Needs of the Parish***

This section of the Stewardship Manual will provide guidance for the journey (see Examples and Templates in the back of this section) to help the Stewardship Committee of the parish determine:

- What are the needs of the parish today?
- How are these needs being fulfilled?
- How is the parish changing?
- How can we best support the changes?

The data collected during the assessment can be used to establish:

- Ministry that is being done well
- Ministry that may be improved
- Ministries that no longer are filling a need

The results of the assessment of ministries generate valuable information about how the parish is now and how parishioners see it in the future. This can be captured by first organizing the responses using a tool such as a Diagram of Ministries, as shown in *Example 2.1, pages 10-11*.

If the Stewardship Committee receives feedback on the need for new ministries, it is critical that the initiator understand the importance of forming the ministry team and the required budget. To help with this education an example of a process for proposing new ministries is provided along with a New Ministry Assessment Sheet. See *Examples 2.5 and 2.6 pages 17-19*.

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# *Ministry Assessment and Future Vision*

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## ***Building for the Future***

After the ministry assessments are completed, the parish is in a good position to begin some visioning work. The pastor, ministry leaders, and parishioners can begin to envision the parish in three to five years, in light of assessment results. The end of this section will give specific tools and examples to help with visioning.

After the Stewardship Committee organizes the results, the next step in sharing this information can be in the form of a Ministry Catalog. An example can be found on the Diocese of Cleveland Stewardship web page. The catalog can provide a summary of the current status of the ministries and what is needed to move toward the parish vision. The first time a catalog is created it can include the Parish's vision for the next year. This can then be used as a basis for further visioning.

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# Ministry Assessment and Future Vision

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## Getting Started

### ***Strengthening the Ministry of the Parish***

To establish the needs of the parish so that good Stewardship may be best applied, the Stewardship Committee should first spend some time in discussion about the life of the parish. This discussion may be assisted through, or with the use of, information gathered in the *Vibrant Parish Life* process. The “Composite Summary Report” first completed by each parish in 2003, and updated in 2007, can be given to each committee member. With this information, the group can answer the following questions.

- What are our current needs and are we addressing them?
- Is our community changing?
- How are we changing?
- How shall we meet needs in the future?

Once this discussion has taken place and the Stewardship Committee has deepened their awareness of the needs of the parish, a formal assessment process may begin.

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### ***Formal Assessment***

The Ministry Assessment Process is best done through interaction between the Stewardship Committee team members and parish ministry leaders. A Ministry Assessment Form can be used for this purpose such as the one shown in *Example 2.4, pages 14-16*. This assessment form should be reviewed and revised as necessary to fit the specific circumstance of the parish.

In preparation of the assessment, take the following steps:

1. List the number of ministries currently being undertaken by the parish. (See Diagram of Ministries, *Example 2.1, pages 10-11* for a suggested format.) Be generous with the definition of ministry. The smallest ministry can have the greatest impact. All of God’s work has value.
2. Gather pertinent information about the ministry leaders. (See the Leader Contact List, *Example 2.2, page 12* for a suggested format.)
3. Plan how many ministry leaders each Stewardship Committee member will “interview”.
4. Send a copy of the assessment form to the leader with a letter explaining what information will be gathered, how it will be gathered, and why it is important. This letter may be from the pastor, such as in *Example 2.3, page 13*.
5. What is the time allowed to complete these interviews? Don’t rush but don’t let it drag on either. A month is suggested as adequate time if the team is focused.
6. How shall the assessments be done? Listed in order of effectiveness:



# Ministry Assessment and Future Vision

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- a. In person – Offer to meet for coffee or at the church or somewhere relaxed and comfortable. This forges relationships that make the whole process more visible and trusted.
  - b. By phone – Only if necessary and after the leader has seen and discussed the questionnaire with team members.
  - c. Through email – This works, but it is impersonal.
  - d. By mail
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## Enhancing Parish Ministry

After the Stewardship Committee reviews the information gathered during the assessment process, some analysis is necessary to answer the following questions:

- What does the parish do well? (assessment of current ministries)
- What shall the parish do more of? (based on data collected)
- What should the parish do less of? (based on feedback)

A sample form is provided to help the Stewardship committee organize the information from the assessment. See the Assessment Information Analysis Tool, on the Diocese of Cleveland Stewardship web page.

If the Stewardship committee receives feedback on the need for new ministries, it is critical that the initiator understand the importance of forming the ministry team and the budget required. To help with this education, an example of a process for proposing new ministries is provided along with a New Ministry Assessment Sheet, *Examples 2.5 and 2.6, pages 17-19*.

Once the analysis is completed, the information should be assembled into a parish Ministry Catalog, similar to the examples shown on the Diocese of Cleveland Stewardship web page. This Ministry Catalog should then be mailed to all parishioners and included in a welcome packet given to all newly registered parishioners. Section 5 of this manual, *Stewardship Commitment Process*, suggests a process for this distribution.

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## Lessons Learned (Tips and Tricks)

The first step in understanding current ministry efforts of the parish is to assess them. Here are some important considerations on how to proceed with the assessment process. They are based on the experience of parishes that have already embarked on this journey.

- **Listen** - God gave us two ears and one mouth. Be prepared to LISTEN to the leaders twice as much as you speak; they will appreciate the opportunity to talk about their ministry. They may not know the exact answers to some questions, but that is important information too. Accurately record their input.
- **Document** – Accurately record their input
- **Be Inclusive** - When interviewing ministry leaders, it is helpful to interview the parish staff as well. Oftentimes the staff is performing duties or tasks integral to various ministries without being directly a part of any particular ministry. As you go through the process you may discover tasks that could perhaps be done by volunteers to somewhat relieve the staff and pastor.
- **Be open** to the potential for combining or even eliminating ministries to be more effective in providing the needs of the parish and community.
- **Think “outside the box”** to identify what ministries may be missing.
- **Discuss** how to select, train and mentor future ministry leaders.
- **Be sure** that ministry leaders have access to support from other groups such as the Parish Council.





## Examples and Templates

Included in this section are sample materials for your reference, adaptation and use in Assessing Ministries and Creating Future Vision. Included here are:

- 2.1. Diagram of Ministries with sample ministry definitions
- 2.2. Leader Contact List
- 2.3. Letter of Introduction from the Pastor on the Ministry Assessment
- 2.4. Ministry Assessment Form
- 2.5. Process for New Ministries
- 2.6. New Ministry Assessment Sheet

