

Section 8:

Children's Stewardship

Section Contents:

Stewardship Roadmap

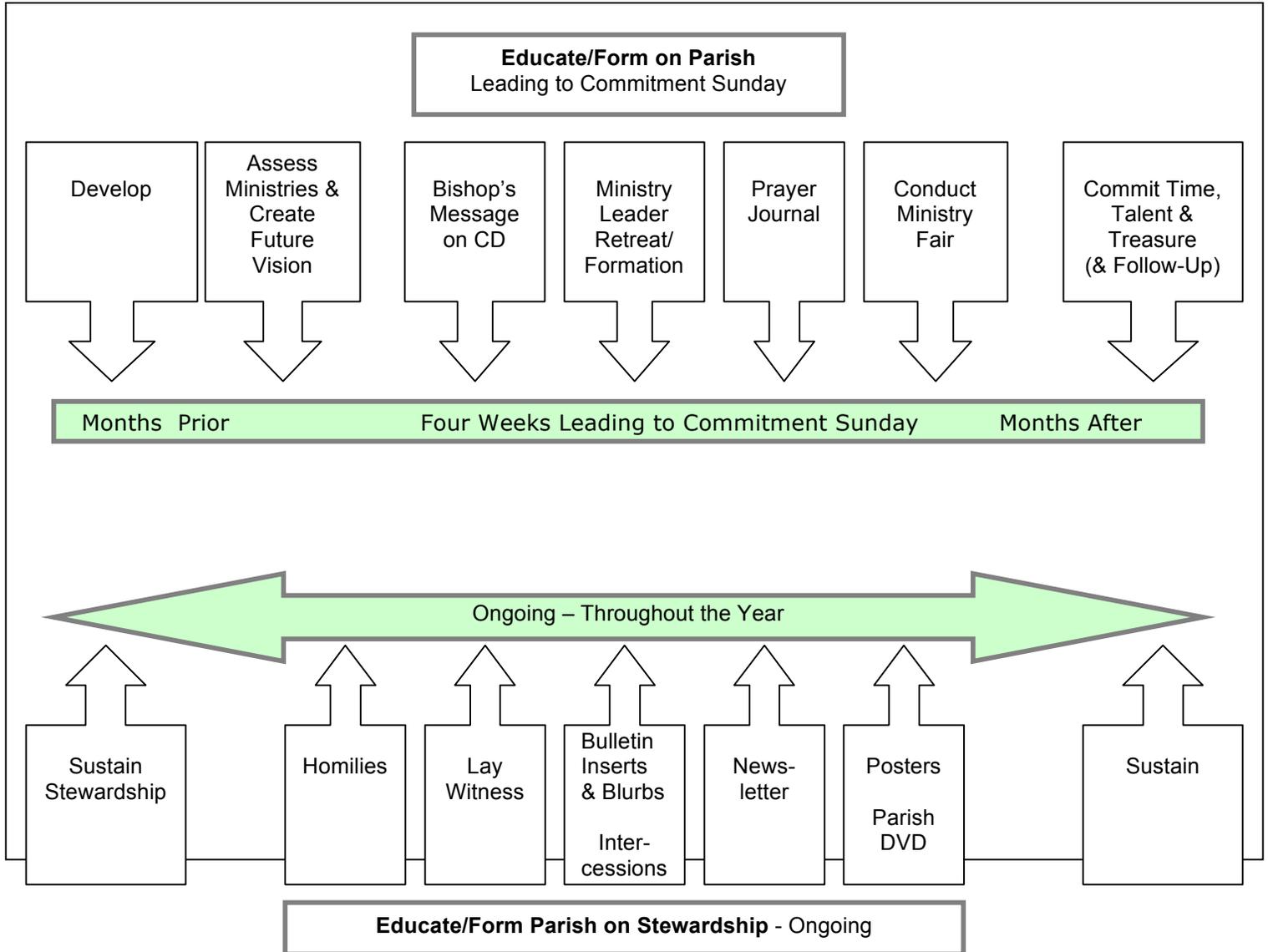
1. Children's Stewardship Overview	4
2. Getting Started	4
• Making the Connections	4
• Forming a Children's Stewardship Committee	5
• Sustaining Children's Stewardship	6
• Additional Children's Stewardship Resources	6
3. Lessons Learned (Tips and Tricks)	8
4. Examples and Templates	9
5. Additional Resources and Websites	36

"...[We] must teach [our] children the truths of the faith and pray with them; share Christian values with them in the face of pressures to conform to the hostile values of a secularized society; and initiate them into the practice of stewardship itself, in all its dimensions, contrary to today's widespread consumerism and individualism."

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



Stewardship Roadmap



The Stewardship Manual provides a roadmap to implementing and sustaining a successful Stewardship process in parish. The roadmap is divided into 6 sections:

1. Developing a Stewardship Committee
2. Assessing Ministries and Creating a Future Visio
3. Educating and Forming the Parish on Stewardship
4. Conducting the Ministry Fair
5. Committing Time, Talent, and Treasure
6. Sustaining Stewardship
7. The Manual contains 4 additional sections containing materials for: Discernment of Gifts
8. Children's Stewardship
9. *A Steward's Prayer and Reflection Journal*
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.



Children's Stewardship Overview

Since Stewardship encompasses all aspects of the Christian life, it follows that Children's Stewardship processes and resources are a part of this manual.

In the Bishops' Pastoral Letter on Stewardship, children are specifically mentioned, and adults are instructed to include them in the formation and practice of Stewardship in the domestic church, which is the home, and by extension, the parish community, the school, and other places where children could gain knowledge and insights into the Stewardship process.

This section will offer examples, templates and resources to help adults make the connections between current ministries or programs in which the children in the parish are currently involved and Stewardship.

Other offerings include resources to engage more formal Stewardship practices such as forming a Children's Stewardship Committee, ideas for sustained Children's Stewardship, and practical educational resources such as lesson plans to use in the classroom or in catechesis.



Getting Started

Making the Connections

Many of the activities and programs that children are involved in at the parish, whether it is in school, PSR, Generations of Faith, or the like, already point to Stewardship. Take some time to think about what the children in the parish or parish school are engaged in and make some connections. The following is a list to get the brainstorming started, but it is by no means exhaustive.

Time

- Prayer services (see *Example 8.1 (page 10)* for a suggested **Lenten Prayer Service**)
- Liturgies celebrated during school or other times of catechesis
- Prayer corners
- Times of special liturgies—May Crowning, Stations of the Cross

Talent

- Helping a new student
- Cleaning the desks, chalk boards, pews in church



Children's Stewardship

- Organizing a charity event
- Actively participating in school or parish events
- Altar Server
- Pen Pal correspondences
- Visiting hospitals, nursing homes and care facilities
- Planting a garden
- Recycling
- Mission work

Treasure

- Children's offertory envelopes
- Food drives
- Giving tree
- Special collections—clothing, school supplies for children in other communities, necessities for people living abroad

Once the connections have been made, begin to share with the children how what is already being done is living a Stewardship way of life. By sharing their gifts of time, talent and treasure in a spirit of gratitude and with a sense of love and justice to build God's kingdom, they are acting as good stewards! Encourage age-appropriate discussion about other ways Stewardship could be embraced and what the "next steps" could be in terms of level of commitment, and ideas for engagement at home or in the parish. *Example 8.2, (page 11) Give Thanks and Share*, can offer suggestions as well.

Forming a Children's Stewardship Committee

After some connections have been made (see above) begin to talk more formally about the concept of Stewardship and vocabulary. See *Talk the Talk!, Example 8.3 (page 13)*, which can be a good discussion starter and resource aid, offering the language of Stewardship.

Consider then forming a Children's Stewardship Committee in the school or parish. It can be made up of students, young parishioners, teachers, catechists and/or administrators. Members may serve for one to two years and the committee should be between 8 to 12 people. It could be an advisory group or decision making group depending on the situation. Refer to Section 1 of this manual, "*Developing a Stewardship Committee*" for further guidelines, since children's Stewardship can parallel the parish Stewardship process.

The role of this committee may include but is not limited to:

- Help children and young people develop a sense of giftedness and gratitude
- Help children and young people discover their giftedness
- Affirm their acts of Stewardship throughout the school and parish
- Model parish Stewardship efforts
 - Plan and conduct a Ministry Fair for children
 - Organize children "Lay Witness Talks"
 - Ask children to pledge their time, talent and treasure
- Facilitate other opportunities of commitment in time, talent and treasure



Children's Stewardship

See *Walk the Talk!*, Example 8.4 (page 14), for ideas and activities in which this committee may engage in developing Stewardship.

Sustaining Children's Stewardship

Sustaining Children's Stewardship is possible. With some creativity and planning, the efforts put into the initial process can be expanded and enhanced. Consider some of the following ideas:

- Include opportunities for service within and outside the school and parish
- Be sure there are ways that all children can participate in offering commitments of time, talent and treasure
- Remind children of their pledges of time, talent and treasure (if such a pledging process was held) and ask them to share their experiences from these commitments
- Look for ways to make connections between Stewardship and the Sacraments
- Build Stewardship into school lesson plans in a formal way. Listed below are many examples of lesson plans for children of various ages:
 - Example 8.5 (page 15) *Time: In Prayer*
 - Example 8.6 (page 17) *Talent: Gifted Awareness*
 - Example 8.7 (page 18) *Talent: Individual Giftedness*
 - Example 8.8 (page 19) *Treasure*
 - Example 8.9 (page 20) *Communal Giftedness*
 - Example 8.10 (page 21) *Stewards of Church*
(specific to Grades 4-6)
 - Example 8.11 (page 24) *Stewards of Life: Discipleship*
(specific to Grades 10-12)
- Report acts of Stewardship on a regular basis in verbal announcements at school or PSR classes. Follow up with **Certificates of Giftedness**, as shown in Example 8.12 (page 33).
- For Children's Stewardship commitment forms, see Section 5 of this manual, *Stewardship Commitment Process*; refer to Examples 5.6 and 5.7.
- Refer to **Additional Children Stewardship Resources** below for references to books and websites with children's stewardship ideas and practices.

Additional Children's Stewardship Resources and Websites

Listed below are just a few of the many resources specific to Children's Stewardship. For additional resources on Stewardship in general, see page 36.

Websites:

www.archstl.org/stewardship/whatis/children.html
www.dow.org/documents/Stewardship_Resources.pdf
<http://www.diometuchen.org/stewardship/youth.html>



Children's Stewardship

Books:

The Catholic Kid's Guide to Stewardship

Twenty Third Publications

1 Montauk Ave #200

New London, CT 06320

Phone: 800-321-0411

Web site: www.twentythirdpublications.com

Children's Stewardship Manual

ICSC

1275 K Street, Suite 980

Washington, DC 20005-4006

Phone: 202-289-1093

E-mail: orders@catholicstewardship.org

Web site: www.catholicstewardship.org

Sharing Our Gifts of the Heart: A Curriculum Guide for Stewardship in CCD classes

Archdiocese of Louisville

Office of Stewardship and Development

PO Box 1073

Louisville, KY 40201

Phone: 502-585-3291

Web site: www.archlou.org

Stewardship Programs for Children and Youth

By Rita McCarthy Swartz

Sheed & Ward Publications

30 Amberwood Parkway

Ashland, OH 44805

Phone: 800-266-5564

E-mail: order@bookmaster.com

Web site: www.sheedandward.com

Taking Care of God's Gifts : An activity book

By Laurie Whitfield and Robert Cammarata

Our Sunday Visitor

200 Noll Plaza

Huntington, IN 46750

Phone: 800-348-2886

E-mail: osvsales@osv.com

Web site: www.osv.com





Lessons Learned (Tips and Tricks)

Lessons learned in the process of Children's Stewardship include:

- **Opportunities** – In order for Stewardship to be embraced by everyone, opportunities to participate must be available to everyone—day school children, PSR children, all ages, etc.
 - **Follow-Up** – So as not to be forgotten, some form of follow-up should be done to help children remember their commitments of time, talent and treasure, if pledging was conducted. This follow-up can take the form of quarterly reminder notes, or asking children to report back on their activity.
 - **Variety** – Offer a wide array of suggestions for sharing time, talent and treasure.
 - **Parent Involvement** – Offer parents the opportunity to read the U. S. Bishops' Pastoral Letter on Stewardship called *Stewardship: A Disciples Response*. Plan a Stewardship mini-conference in which the children present information and the process about Stewardship to the adults/parents in the parish.
 - **Family Activity** – Involve the whole family in an activity with the child or children. See *Example 8.13 (page 34)*, **Creation Booklet**, for one idea of family participation.
 - **Visioning** – Include Stewardship in the long-range planning process of the school or parish children's programs.
 - **Modeling** – Help make sure the children of the parish have the opportunity to see the adults in the parish share commitments of time, talent and treasure.
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Examples and Templates

Included in this section are sample materials for use in the school and/or parish relating to the Children's Stewardship process. Included here are:

- 8.1 Lenten Prayer Service
- 8.2 Give Thanks and Share
- 8.3 Talk the Talk!
- 8.4 Walk the Talk!
- 8.5 Time in Prayer
- 8.6 Talent: Gifted Awareness
- 8.7 Talent: Individual Giftedness
- 8.8 Treasure
- 8.9 Communal Giftedness
- 8.10 Stewards of Church (specific to grades 4-6)
- 8.11 Stewards of Life: Discipleship (specific to grades 10-12)
- 8.12 Certificate of Giftedness
- 8.13 Creation Booklet



Children's Stewardship

Example 8.1

LENTEN PRAYER SERVICE

Objective: All that we are and all that we have, We Are Grateful!

Supplies:

- Music: "We Fall Down" and/or "Amazing Love" (Song Sheets)
- Prayer Table, OR, in Church (Steps of the Altar)
- Purple Cloth, Candles, Flowers, Bible, Many Different Crosses
- 1 Basket with Jewels (Anything that looks like jewels)
- 1 Basket with pre-cut purple ribbon pieces (Or anything else)

Purple Ribbon

Start off by preparing the Prayer Space. Have the Crosses in prominent places throughout the space. As they enter the room, have them take one item from each basket. Take some time to quiet the group. Explain to them that the purple ribbon represents their sinfulness or their faults. Have them think about something in their lives that is a bad habit; something that they would like to get rid of this Lenten Season. Give them examples of things they might be doing that they shouldn't be doing. Or, maybe there is something they need to do better, some part of them that needs some work. In what areas are we lacking in our Time, Talent and Treasure?

Jewel

Then talk about the jewel. These are our Gifts. Think about how blessed we are. How has God blessed us with Talents? How much stuff do we have? How fortunate are we to have been born in a free country that allows us to pray.

As the songs are playing, have each person come up one by one and give back the jewels and the faults to God. Offer all of yourself back to God. Thank God for all we have and all we are. And ask God to help us in our brokenness.

As the other children are coming forward ask the rest of the children to raise their hands to pray for each other as they come before the Lord. This is a good way to start teaching about praying for each other.

*Copyright 2008 "Got Gifts? You Betcha" Stewardship for Everyone written by Vicky Petro. Copied with Permission.



Example 8.2

Give Thanks and Share!

Our baptism calls us to help build God's kingdom by participating in the mission of Jesus. We do this as Christian stewards when we receive God's gifts gratefully, cultivate them responsibly, share them in love and justice with others, and stand before the Lord in a spirit of accountability.

Making Connections

Use the following list of ministries to help children develop a sense of giftedness and make connections with a stewardship way of life. Perhaps new ministries might be created.

Altar Server	Handiwork
Lector	Landscape
Junior Catechist	Advent Projects
Catechist Assistant	Lenten Projects
Office Helpers	Back to School Supplies
Usher	Collect Canned Goods
Hospitality	Giving Tree
Hall Monitors	Pen Pals
Children's Choir/Band	Greeting Cards
Theatre Productions	Team with Children's Hospital or Senior Care Facilities
Family Activities	Justice and Peace Committee
Environment in Art and Worship	Student Council
Adopt a Grandparent	Church Mice (helping with simple maintenance in the church)
Tutoring	
Environmental Concerns	
CYO	

**The possibilities are as endless as
God's generosity!**



Children's Stewardship

Example 8.2 (cont'd)

Here are ways to show thanks to God and share our gifts with others

Giving Thanks and Sharing Our Gifts

We thank God by using our gifts with love and joy in service to others. Here are some ways we can thank God for everything God has given us.

- Create a "Thank You, God" card which can be brought up during Liturgy
- Offer a class-prepared Thanksgiving Prayer
- Create a litany of Thanksgiving
- Include a "Thank You, God" section in the bulletin that is composed by the children

Help the children develop a sense that we are all responsible for using our gifts for good, by incorporating the following ideas.

- Reference gifts in the children's experience for which they need to exercise care and to share (e.g. pets, toys, seedlings/plants, personal hygiene, their rooms, siblings, etc.).
- Share scripture stories (parables in particular—the talents, the seeds, the fig tree, the lost coin, etc.) that illustrate Jesus' ideas about the need to use our gifts responsibly.
- Always, and in all ways, communicate what is happening in the lives of the community's children as gifts are being used and shared well.

Introduce an envelope program as one way of showing accountability for sharing gifts.

- Use envelopes that include the use and sharing of time, talent, and material possessions.
- Create your own envelopes! Have a group effort for each class or grade level to design their own envelopes.
- Approach your parish envelope company or other vendor to sponsor envelopes for each month, quarter or year at no cost.

-Adapted from "Give Thanks and Share!" resource. Office of Parish Stewardship, Diocese of Rockville Centre, NY.



Example 8.3

Talk the Talk! **The Language of Stewardship**

Some examples for you...why not think of more!

Spirituality—A Way of Life
Our Need to Trust in God
Our Dependence on God
God as Source of all things
Share from our First Fruits
Renewed in Christ
Attitude of Gratitude
Gratitude to a generous God
Connections/Interconnectedness
The Vision (The Reign of God/The Kingdom of God)
Conversion/New Way of Living
Counter-cultural
Commitment
Gifts/Gifted
Charisms/Spiritual Gifts
All is Gift
Special-Unique Gifts
Personal Gifts
Communal (Social) Gifts
Receive God's gifts gratefully
Cultivate our gifts responsibly
Share our gifts lovingly and in justice with others
Return our gifts with increase to the Lord
Take care of our gifts responsibly
Time, Talent, Treasure
Take-A-Step
The Biblical Tithe
Planned, Proportionate, Prayerful, Sacrificial Giving
Accountable/Accountability
Corporate Accountability (the Church, Business, etc.)
Responsibility
Gifted and Called
Call/Called by God

Baptismal Call
Personal Vocation
Response (personal and communal)
Disciple/Follower of Jesus
Steward disciple
Stewardship discipleship
The Cost of Discipleship
Apostle/Apostleship
Ministers/Ministry
"Come, Follow Me"
Joyful Response (in faith)
Need to Give vs. Give to Need
Possessions as privileges vs. possessions as rights
Stewards vs. Owners
Stewards vs. Accumulators
Ours vs. Mine
Mary as steward of Jesus, God's greatest gift

Themes from the Bishops' Pastoral Letter on Stewardship:

Stewardship: A Disciple's Response
Stewards of Human Life
Stewards of Creation
Stewards of Vocation
Stewards of Justice and Peace
Stewards of the Environment
Stewards of Money and Possessions
Collaborators in Creation
Global Stewardship
Stewards of the Church
Community and Stewardship
Creation and Stewardship
Evangelization and Stewardship
Solidarity and Stewardship
Eucharistic Stewardship

-Adapted from "Talk the Talk!" resource. Office of Parish Stewardship, Diocese of Rockville Centre, NY.



Example 8.4

Walk the Talk!

As Stewardship develops at the school or parish, the following ideas can help direct a Children's Stewardship Committee toward determining focus and direction.

We are All Gifted!

- Develop the sense that ALL we have and are is a gift from God.
- Discuss what a gift is; use the children's experience of gifts as something chosen with care, wrapped, special, given out of love. Discuss the need to thank the giver, take care of the gift, etc.
- Help the children name some of the gifts that come from God—Family, friends, animals, pets, school, teachers, books, home, earth, trees, money, toys, clothes, talents, skills, etc.
- Foster the fact that each of us is gifted in different ways. Not everyone has the same gifts. Our particular gifts make us special. Everyone, though, has God-given gifts!

Discover!

Help the children discover their individual gifts

- Do activities with the children to discover what they are good at, what they like to do, what brings them joy—this constitutes some of their gifts!

Identify communal gifts

- What does the class or group of their friends enjoy doing and do well? What could they do together?
- Discuss the workings of a team—each player has a particular position and every position is needed and has equal value to the team. EVERYONE'S gifts are needed to build God's kingdom.

Encourage the children to recognize the gifts of others

- Have the children listen to stories told by another or observe someone else doing a particular task. What gifts did they see or hear?

Affirm!

- Post gifts discovered and acts of stewardship in the parish bulletin, newsletter or other communications. Use pictures and tell the story to create excitement!
- Celebrate our giftedness!
 - Regularly and publicly celebrate the gifts of the children at Mass (in the general intercessions, homilies, and in song) or parish events.
 - Use banners, songs, skits, witness talks, pictures, gift tree or other creative ways of celebrating the gifts of the children with the parish community. It could be contagious!

-Adapted from "Walk the Talk!" resource. Office of Parish Stewardship, Diocese of Rockville Centre, NY



Children's Stewardship

Example 8.5

As the parish and school embark on Children's Stewardship be assured that some aspects of this process are incorporated into the current programs and curriculums. The following lesson plans are intended as examples which can be adjusted and modified to fit the needs of the parish or school.

TIME: IN PRAYER

Objective: To become aware of God's presence in our lives. What does our time in prayer say about our relationship with God?

Supplies: Prayer Awareness Sheet
Pen or Pencil
Time

The best way to really know if we are actually spending time in prayer is to try and keep track of it. When we have to think about our day, or write down actual movements, we can really see what our spiritual life looks like.

When we become aware of our precious time we spend with God, we can see if we are on the right track. If we are not, we can certainly take steps to better our relationship with God.

It is only after personal reflection that we can know ourselves better. We as catechists are called to help our children know, love and serve God. This is a very simple way to begin that process.

Activity Sheet

On the following page you will find the **Prayer Awareness Sheet**. Each student will get one of these sheets to take home. During the following week, ask them to write down every time they pray. This can be formal prayer or times that they were aware of God's presence. It might have been when they took a walk in the park and thought about how beautiful God's creations are. It might have been when they were doing the dishes and thought how thankful they are for their family. These are some examples on how to get them started.

Write down daily each time you pray or are aware of God's presence.



Example 8.5 (cont'd)

Prayer Awareness Sheet

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday



Example 8.6

TALENT: GIFTED AWARENESS

Objective: To help children become aware of their own giftedness.

God loves us so much that He gave everyone of us at least one Spiritual Gift. Helping children become aware of their giftedness is very exciting. The following exercise will help the children begin to understand their own unique gift.

Activity: Guided Meditation

- Have the children sit back, relax and close their eyes.
- Ask them to imagine a time when they were doing some project or activity and felt really excited and alive.
- Tell them that this activity could be helping someone, building something, painting, singing, playing music, cooking, planting a garden, giving something away, etc.
- Now ask them to remember if they were doing the activity for another person. If they were, ask, "What did the other person look like? How did the other person feel or react when they saw or heard what you had done or made?"
- If you did the project on your own, how did you feel when you reflected on what you had accomplished? Did you thank God? Were you grateful for the ability to help or create?
- Ask: "What do you think your gift is? Is it music? Is it building something? Is it welcoming people into your house and making them feel really special? Is it making a beautiful garden?"
- When you use your Spiritual Gifts you always feel excited and alive. You thank God for your special gift. Other people benefit when you use your gifts as well. Everyone is grateful to God.
- This is the first step in realizing you are gifted. You are called by God to use your gifts to build up the Body of Christ. When we use our gifts, the community is strengthened.
- If we do not use our gifts, the community suffers because it is missing a very important part — YOU!!

*Idea taken from "Spiritual Gifts Experience" written by Vicky Petro and Lee Palencar Copyright 2005. Used with Permission.



Example 8.7

TALENT: INDIVIDUAL GIFTEDNESS

Objective: What does Holiness look like?

Supplies:

- Paper
- Crayons/Markers
- Pre-Cut Outline of a Person

We are all called to be Saints. If we are truly following God's plan for our life we should be developing Christ-like qualities. Have the children think about their gifts. What are they good at? How are they blessed? Who are the people in their lives that are important? What possessions are they grateful for? How much time do they spend in prayer, thanking God?

Question: How do you, as SAINT, use your Time, Talent & Treasure?

Now have them write down all of the giftedness about themselves. On their paper, have them draw an outline of a person. This is the student as a Saint. What symbol can they draw that would represent themselves? For example:

- A lion—strong, determined
- Armor—sturdy and protecting
- An Ear—good Listener,
- A Smile Face—happy and encouraging

Now have them write on their person how they use their Talents or Gifts.

Then talk about Prayer. How do they pray? How much time do they spend talking to God? What does their prayer space look like? Have them draw their Time in Prayer.

Then move on to their Treasures. What do they own that they share? What do they have that they don't really need? What could they give away to someone in need? Do they give a portion of their money to the poor? Do they give a portion of their money to their Church (Parish)? Have them do the same drawing on their person of giving of their Treasure.

*Idea taken from "Spiritual Gifts Experience" written by Vicky Petro and Lee Palencar Copyright 2005. Used with Permission.



Example 8.8

TREASURE

Objective: To be thankful for all we have and to share with those less fortunate.

Supplies: Cardboard or Heavy Material or small wooden chests can be purchased at a local craft store
Art Supplies (markers, crayons, glue, glitter etc.)
Scissors

In this lesson you are going to have the children make **Treasure Chests**. They will take them home and fill them with their most prized possessions. These possessions can be favorite toys, games, phones, money, clothes, pictures, etc. When they bring them back, you will ask them to talk about one item in their Treasure Chest, their favorite one. Then you will pose the following questions.

1. **Why is this treasure your favorite?**
2. **Do you take good care of this treasure?**
3. **Will you share your favorite treasure with someone else? Who? Why?**
4. **What if someone else needed your favorite treasure? Would you give it to them?**
5. **Would you give it away with no strings attached?**
6. **Would it make a difference if you knew them or not?**

After this exercise you can have great discussions about how all things come from God. We are to be good stewards of God's gifts and take care of them.

When someone needs the gifts we have, we are to share them with others. This is how we live a stewardship life.



Example 8.9

COMMUNAL GIFTEDNESS

Eucharist: Come to the Banquet

Objective: We are all called and gifted!

Supplies:

Table	Placemats (made ahead of time)	Table Cloth
Flowers	Candle or Candles	Bible
Prayer Cards	Music	Song sheets
Basket for Petitions	Basket for Goods	Basket for Money
Chairs	Food	Drink
Plates	Silverware	Cups

This Prayer Service/Activity is building on one that has been used for years. It teaches us that the Eucharistic Liturgy is a Celebration, a Feast, and a Banquet. Introducing Stewardship into this Prayer Service is easy.

First prepare the children at a previous class by discovering their Talents. Everyone is gifted in some way. Everyone will bring something to the Table. The above list gives you the major parts. As you learn your children's Talents you might be adding to the list. The creative people will enjoy making placemats, flower arrangements, etc. Children that are gifted in cooking will prepare the meal. Music people will gravitate toward that and good readers will want to proclaim the Gospel. Organizers will love to plan and Service-oriented children will love to set things up, arrange and clean. Everyone will be happy doing their part. They will learn about being part of the Body of Christ.

Before the meal is served, say the prayers. Ask for prayer petitions and put them in the basket. Ask for money and goods and put them in the baskets.

Also, you will be talking ahead about the importance of their Time—Prayer, and their Treasure—Money and Goods. This is where the Offertory comes in. Explain: Because we are so blessed, we need to give back to our Church. God is pleased when we respond to the needs of others.

After the meal thank God for EVERYTHING!

