

JESUS CHRIST,

# PRINCE OF PEACE CATHOLIC CHURCH



JANUARY 2012

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## Maintaining Financial Peace

**M**ary Connell was visiting her sister in Arizona when she found out that her brother-in-law and niece were participating in a program being offered through their parish called *Dave Ramsey's Financial Peace University*. Out of curiosity, Mary decided to sit in on one of the sessions, and she was amazed at how simple, effective, entertaining, and spiritually enriching the program was. Immediately, Mary's thoughts turned to implementing the program at her home parish of Jesus Christ, Prince of Peace.

"With the economy as bad as it is, it's a program I think everyone needs," Mary explains. "I run a business, and I have four sons and wanted them to be a part of it as well, so I thought it would be something that would be great for the parish to do. I ordered the coordinator's kit, and since I was on the Stewardship Committee, that was a great avenue to get it started. I got permission from the pastor, and we've run it twice so far. It's been very successful, so we're looking at starting a third session this month."

The program, created by financial author Dave Ramsey, features a 13-week, DVD-based curriculum that teaches participants how to eliminate debt, invest wisely,

and save for the future – all while giving back to God from their first fruits as faithful disciples of Christ.

"It's basically a discipleship program that teaches people about managing and being good stewards of what God gives them," Mary says. "It's biblically-based, and it goes over what the Bible teaches us about money. It's a nuts-and-bolts financial lesson on everything from paying your bills, to savings and insurance, to teaching how to get bargains. It's about you being in control of your money and telling your money what to do, not vice-versa."

Mary says that one of the things that has made this program successful, in her experiences teaching it, is the mutual support that participants can offer one another throughout the course of the curriculum.

"I like the small classes, because it's more intimate and people are more will-



*Mary Connell will facilitate Dave Ramsey's Financial Peace University at Jesus Christ, Prince of Peace Parish.*

*continued on back cover*



# Congratulations to You!

## Results of the 2011 Stewardship Renewal

Our parish conducted its 2011 Annual Stewardship Renewal throughout August and September. The results are extremely encouraging, and show signs of growth within our parish community.

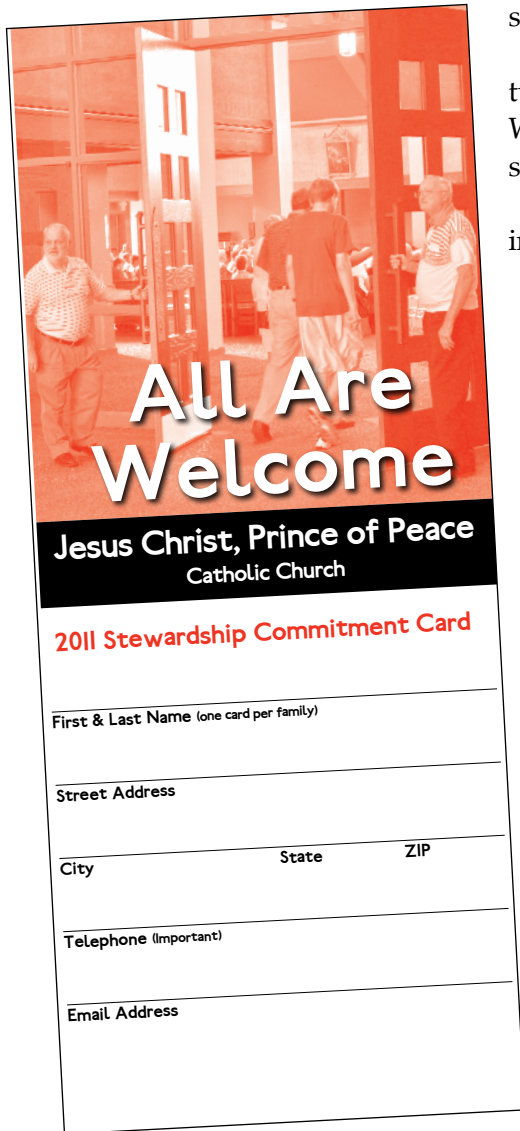
Almost 675 households participated in the Stewardship Renewal by turning in a commitment card, which is more than 100 more than last year. With that, 73% of our active households participated. What a wonderful sign that our parish is growing to embrace stewardship as a way of life!

Just a few of the outstanding results from the 2011 Stewardship Renewal include:

- All together, our parish families made almost 2,200 commitments to spend time in prayer, such as praying the Rosary, reading from the Bible, praying with family members and attending Eucharistic Adoration.
- Participating households made over 2,600 "Talent" commitments, either recommitting to a parish ministry through which they were already serving or signing up for a ministry with which they were not previously involved. Of the many "Talent" commitments, 564 were new commitments to join a parish ministry; this is a strong sign that parishioners are interested in becoming active members of the parish, or taking their participation in parish life to the next level.
- The five most popular ministry commitments (including both "interested in joining" commitments and "already involved" commitments) were Baking/Salads/Desserts, 249 commitments; Gift Bearers, 160 commitments; Greeters/Minister of Hospitality, 136 commitments; Ministers of Holy Communion, 129 commitments; and Prayer Line, 103 commitments.
- The average annual offertory commitment this year was \$1,300.

While the statistics from the 2011 Stewardship Renewal are encouraging, the real effect of emphasizing stewardship can never be quantified, for two reasons. First, the spiritual benefits are inestimable. Secondly, even families who didn't return a commitment card this year are nonetheless impacted by the stewardship message and become more generous with their time, talent, and treasure.

Thanks to all parishioners who support Prince of Peace and make our parish a vibrant, faith-filled community.



## What Treasures Will You Offer God in 2012?

Dear Parishioners,

Congratulations! You've survived Christmas!

As wonderful as the Advent season and Christmas are, things can get a little hectic in even the best organized households – and most of us don't live in one of those anyway. Mailing cards, putting up decorations, and attending a round of holiday parties while we're trying to make sure we haven't forgotten a present for everyone on our list tend to make us wake up on Christmas morn feeling joyful but little frazzled. Once we make it past New Year's Day, things calm down a little.

But January still has one big feast for us to celebrate. And because the secular celebrations are over, it may be easier for us to concentrate on the spiritual meaning of this solemnity. I'm thinking, of course, of the Epiphany.

For most of us Epiphany is just an afterthought of Christmas, the day we observe the arrival of the wise men in Bethlehem. And we've all heard homilies explaining how that odd word Epiphany comes from the Greek meaning "showing forth," because the child Jesus was shown forth to the magi (who were Gentiles) as the Savior of all people, not only the Messiah of the Jews. That is true, but the Epiphany has a stewardship message for us as well.

After all, the magi did not come just to gawk at the baby Jesus. They came because they knew he is someone special. "Where is the newborn king of the Jews?" they asked (Mt 2:2), although he's not the sort of king who lives in palaces. As St. Matthew relates it (2:11), "They prostrated themselves and did him homage. Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh." They came to worship, and part of that worship included offering gifts to the newborn Lord.



Certainly Jesus welcomes all who come to visit him, even those who come out of mere curiosity. But when we really meet him, our instinctive response is to worship because we recognize that his character is unlike anyone else we've ever met. Although Jesus, being God become man, is not limited, for most of us our meetings with him take place at Mass or other public services.

But meeting Jesus and worshiping him calls forth an additional response, and so we, along with the wise men, open our treasures. And what are they? They are our Time, our Talent, and our Treasure.

If we so desire, we can find symbolic meanings in the magi's gifts. Gold, of course, represents Treasure. And because even today, frankincense is the chief ingredient in the incense used at Mass, it can stand for the gift of the Time we offer in worship and prayer. Finally, it takes effort and knowledge to transform the raw gum from tree sap into the forms used in perfumes, myrrh is a fitting symbol for our gift of Talent.

As we begin this new year, let us take a moment to reflect on our place in the Epiphany narrative. Are you willing to undertake the journey to find the King? What treasures will you offer him in 2012?

In Christ,

*Fr. Ken Kuntz*

Fr. Ken Kuntz  
Pastor

## Celebrating Catho



*High School students help our third grade students with their reading skills.*

Catholic education is truly a gift, and one that we should celebrate. That is exactly what Catholic Schools Week is all about.

"Our purpose here is to celebrate," says Prince of Peace Catholic School Development Director Karen Witt. "Prince of Peace Catholic School students are part of 32,000 Iowa Catholic school students. It's an opportunity to celebrate the uniqueness of a Catholic Education with our Parish and our community."

Catholic Schools Week is a national campaign sponsored by the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA). Every year, starting on the last Sunday of January, a week is set aside to celebrate Catholic schools across the country.

This year, the theme for Catholic Schools Week is "Catholic Schools: Faith. Academics. Service." Following this theme, Prince of Peace Catholic School has several events and activities planned that include our kick-off Mass on Sunday, Janu-

ary 29th. Parish school students will serve all the ministries of this Mass. In addition, there will be a bulletin insert with responses from our students to the question, "What does a Catholic Education mean to you?" During the week, students will celebrate with cinnamon rolls for breakfast, fundraising for a local charity, making a thank you banner for our parish, as well as many other activities.

In the upcoming 2012-13 school year, the parish has decided to make a major change that will allow it to give even more support to the school, the students and their families.

"As a parish, we consider Catholic education to be important," Fr. Ken Kuntz says. "It's part of the mission of our parish. We've decided to enter into a stewardship covenant with the parents who send their children to Prince of Peace School."

This means that in the coming school year, the parish will provide a subsidy in the amount of \$3700 per

student for each family that chooses to practice stewardship as a way of life. These subsidies go towards covering the cost of education for each of those students.

"The stewardship of treasure from the parish is allocated to the children and young people of our parish who attend Prince of Peace Catholic School," Father says. "It's people-based. The focus is on the children and the young people for whom we want to provide a Catholic education."

Until now, the parish has been allocating a certain amount of its budget to the school. This is a different approach.

"Our goal is to assist families in such a way that more of our families will be able to send their children to our Catholic school because their tuition will be less than it actually costs to educate their child," Fr. Ken says.

Our parish recognizes the blessing that Catholic education is, and

# Catholic Schools Week

these subsidies are a way for us to share that blessing with more of our parish families.

“Personally, I feel it’s a wonderful school,” Fr. Ken says. “It provides not only a sound academic program, but also the opportunity for the children to learn their faith and to grow in their commitment to Jesus Christ and His way of life through the gospel values taught in the school.”

For more information about Catholic Schools Week or the parish’s support of the school, call the Prince of Peace Catholic School office at 563-242-1663.



*Our elementary students collected items for the local Domestic Violence Shelter. The woman from the shelter spoke to our students and there was a short prayer service for victims of violence.*

## Parish Financial Report

(For Period of July 1, 2011 - November 30, 2011)

*Thank you for supporting Jesus Christ, Prince of Peace Parish with your gifts of treasure. By sharing your gifts, you strengthen our mission to fulfill the call of Jesus to teach, sanctify and spread the Good News in our world.*

Please contact the Parish Business Administrator at 242-3311 if you have questions or wish to see more detailed financial reports.

	Actual	Budget
<b>Gifts (Income) Received</b>		
Ordinary Income	377,028	404,073
Auxiliary Income	484	875
Development/Building Fund	30,038	35,230
Memorials, Interest and Investments	9,420	2,000
<b>Total Gifts (Income) Received</b>	<b>416,970</b>	<b>442,178</b>
<b>Gifts (Expenses) Used</b>		
2010-11 ADA Shortfall Expense	14,040	0
Admin Staff/Priests Wages/Employer Tax	84,453	85,504
Building Maintenance/Repairs	3,819	3,542
Church Life Expense	203	375
Contractor Services/Equipment/Insurance/Office Expense/Supplies/Etc.	34,551	53,247
Extraordinary Repairs (concrete sidewalks repairs)	5,317	0
Faith Formation Expense	31,755	37,818
Family Life Expense	151	610
Hospitality/Parish Appreciation Dinner	5,740	4,650
Liturgy Expense	17,370	18,417
School Subsidy	210,721	210,721
Stewardship Development & Evangelization	25,909	23,345
Utilities	11,449	15,060
<b>Total Gifts (Expenses) Used</b>	<b>445,478</b>	<b>453,289</b>
<b>Net (Deficit) Year to Date</b>	<b>-28,508</b>	

## *Pillars of Stewardship*

# Prayer: Come to Know the Lord

**W**e make constant reference to the three Ts of stewardship, recognizing that to truly live as a stewardship people we must give God the first fruits of our Time, our Talent, and our Treasure. It is easy for us to see the concrete reality of the latter two. To give God our Talents, we must first recognize with what talents He has blessed us, and then use those talents for His greater glory. On the same token, our money is something concrete, and when we recognize it as a gift from God, we are to give a certain amount back to Him. For many of us, it is easy to understand what it means to give God our talent and our treasure.

But what does it mean to give God a portion of our time? This idea is much harder to grasp, and, yet, giving to God the first fruits of our time is just as important as the other two. In fact, if we understand and implement it properly, our stewardship of time will serve as the very foundation from which our stewardship of talent and stewardship of treasure bear fruit.

When we talk about stewardship of time, we are referring to prayer time. Prayer through the celebration of Mass is of the utmost importance in the life of a Catholic. Here at Prince of Peace Parish, we emphasize the opportunity to observe the Lord's Day during our weekend Masses which are at 5:00 pm on Saturday, and 8:00 am, 10:30 am or 6:00 pm on Sunday. We also offer daily Mass on Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 8:00 am, and 5:30 pm on Tuesday and Thursday.

But our prayer life is not confined to Mass, or reciting the Our Father three times a day, or praying the daily rosary. Developing a deeper prayer life is vital for every Christian disciple. The Church in her wondrous wisdom has given us certain prayers to help guide us in our lives, but even our actions and lifestyle can become a form of prayer. And when we talk about stewardship of time, we refer to how we use prayer throughout our daily life to honor the Almighty.

St. John Chrysostom explains, "You should not think of prayer as being a matter of words. It is a desire for God,

an indescribable devotion ... the gift of God's grace." In other words, if we look at prayer as a mere regimen that we must follow everyday, then we do not see to the heart of it. The reality is that prayer will take on different forms for every one of us. One person may have a deep devotion to the Rosary, and in praying it, he is closely united to the Lord, while another person feels deeply connected

to Him through constant conversation — in the car on the way to work, before bed at night, or at other hours throughout the day. Meanwhile, for another person, a daily or weekly hour of silence before the Lord in Eucharistic Adoration is the best place for him to offer the Lord his heart. No matter how, exactly, we choose to pray, we must get to the root of it all. To truly give God our time, it must be a gift of ourselves. It must come from the heart and not take the form of mere word repetition. If we offer an Our Father without meditating on the words, it can become simple recitation.

The point of prayer is to get to know the Lord. If we are committed to living as His disciples, we must be on personal terms with Him. The first disciples didn't know what it meant to pray the Rosary, and until the Lord taught them the Our Father, they couldn't pray that either. But they were definitely true stewards of their time. They walked with Jesus, talked with Jesus, ate meals with Him, and so on. In effect, He was their best friend, and the more they got to know Him, the more they longed to serve Him.

The same holds true for us today. We can walk with Him, talk with Him, and sit with Him just as they did. And He wants us to. In the mind of St. John Chrysostom, there is nothing more worthwhile. "For prayer unites us to God as His companions." How can we serve Him if we don't know Him? Before we can truly be a servant people, we must talk to Him who we wish to serve. When we get to know Him, we will undoubtedly desire nothing more than to serve and be with Him.



# Justice Through Peace

## *Pax Christi*

There are dozens of social injustices facing our society and our world every day. As Catholics, it is important for us to be aware of these issues and to do what we can through prayer and action. That is where Pax Christi comes in.

"It's an adult education that really forms us in our faith," says Gabriela Egging, who helped start our parish's Pax Christi group. "Our faith is such a beautiful thing. Social justice and these issues are all moral issues. I really do think it's making a difference."

The Pax Christi group in our parish is part of the national Catholic organization Pax Christi USA. The mission of this organization is social justice, and the method is peace.

According to the Pax Christi USA Web site, this group began in France in the 1940s. In the wake of World War II, a small group of Catholics met regularly to pray for peace, and also to pray for forgiveness and reconciliation for the millions of French and German Catholics who killed each other during the war. This group soon led to other groups forming in France, then to other countries in Europe. In the early 1970s, Pax Christi came to America.

Now there are local Pax Christi groups like ours in hundreds of parishes and communities across the country working to promote social justice and increase awareness of various social issues.

"That's what our programs are about, and we make ourselves aware of what Christ wants in the world,"



Gabriela says. "He taught us these values of peace and taking care of the world and taking care of each other. The purpose is to educate the parish and the city."

Each year during Lent, our parish Pax Christi group hosts a series of meetings called Peace Soup. These meetings begin with a simple meal of homemade soups and bread, followed by presentations and discussions centered on a specific theme. Some of the themes featured in the past were social action, poverty and social justice, and last year's theme was immigration. The theme for this year's Peace Soup is going to be active nonviolence.

In the past, the group has also held educational programs in the fall on different topics, such as economic and environmental issues.

"The beautiful thing is it gets people talking," Gabriela says. "We

get comments all the time like, 'wow, I had no idea.' The point is to help people form a right conscience."

Not only is our Pax Christi group working to increase awareness and promote social justice through peace in the community, the members are also increasing their own understanding of these issues and what they mean in their own faith lives.

"It's affirming our belief in and our love for our faith and what it calls us to be in issues of social justice and peace," Gabriela says. "And it's beautiful to be together with people who are working to enlighten people and to find out for themselves. I'm not just doing this for other people; I'm doing it for myself, to find out the real meaning of my faith."

For more information about Pax Christi, call Gabriela Egging at 563-242-7894.



# Jesus Christ, Prince of Peace Catholic Church

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www.jcpop.org

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## Mass Schedule

**Saturday**, 5:00 p.m.

**Sunday**, 8:00 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m.

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

## Financial Peace *continued from front cover*

ing to talk," she says "Everybody's faced some sort of financial issue, and you don't talk about it outside the class, but we have people there who hold you accountable week to week for doing a good job, and it's very exciting.

"We talk about consumer debt, and then at the end of the class, everyone totals the debt they have retired during that 13 weeks. The first class I taught graduated 25 people, and the second class graduated 12. And I think the first class retired \$160,000 worth of debt, and the second class was \$72,000. The average person that finishes the class gets out of debt in 18 to 24 months, which to me is quite incredible."

Each class meets once a week for approximately two hours over the course of the 13-week duration of the program. While Mary admits the time commitment may seem daunting at first, she points out that the class is ex-

tremely valuable and informative, and is a great source of support and ideas for parishioners who would like to learn more about managing and being good stewards of their finances.

"I learned more in those 13 weeks than I ever learned in any class I took in high school or college," she says. "Dave Ramsey breaks it all down simply, and he is animated and funny. There are a lot of people that are healthy and can't make their mortgage payments, and they're embarrassed about it. As a parish community, we need to educate them and let them know that people do care about them, and that they're not alone."

The next class will begin Saturday, January 28th at 9:00 am. To register for the upcoming offering of *Dave Ramsey's Financial Peace University*, please call Mary Connell at 563-559-0498.