



Middle Tennessee Steward

Our Faith in Action

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Saving Hope

“For in hope we were saved.” Saint Paul speaks to the Roman faithful of the martyrs being delivered from the bondage of their pain and suffering by hope of a glorious afterlife in the presence of God. Today, The Holy Father, Benedict XVI reminds us of our need to have hope as we strive to live and share the Gospel amidst a world that is highly dysfunctional and amoral. In 2005, he said, “...the virtue of hope is subject to harsh trials in the community of believers. For this very reason, we must be apostles who are filled with hope and joyful trust in God’s promises.”

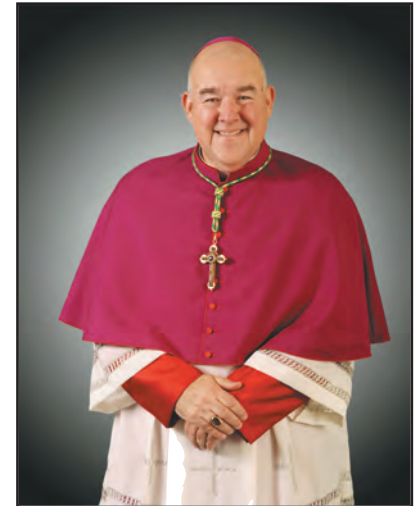
In Pope Benedict’s second encyclical, *Spe Salvi*, he states: “God is the foundation of hope...His Kingdom is not an imaginary hereafter...His Kingdom is present wherever He is loved and wherever His love reaches us.”

The Memorial Acclamation we often voice during Mass, “Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again,” speaks to our shared hope in the Parousia, as does the liturgical passage “as we wait in joy-filled hope for the coming of our Savior Jesus Christ.”

So how do we relate this great virtue to Christian Stewardship? We do not own but steward what God has given to us...which is everything. By such we realize that there will be an accounting of how we have used our gifts. Like the “good and faithful servant” we must strive to nurture and share God’s gifts while they are in our care, grow them and return them to Him with excess. What accounting will we give to our Lord? How will we be judged?

Today, and indeed throughout the Christian era, when the sanctity of life is ignored, when social injustices abound, and when people often face hopelessness; we must grasp on tightly to hope. By His death on the cross and resurrection Jesus defeated death, and gave to us the hope of eternal life. God loves us unconditionally. Yet in order to be saved by hope we must open ourselves up to receiving His love. As Christian stewards we must accept the gift of God’s boundless love, and put all of His gifts to use helping others in need.

God bless you.



Most Reverend David R. Choby
Bishop of Nashville

Mission Statement:

We, the people of the Roman Catholic Church of Middle Tennessee, as stewards of our faith, are called to live and proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ by:

- worshiping God in prayer and sacraments,
- teaching and preaching the Word of God,
- and, loving and serving our neighbors.

**Holy Mary, Mother of God, Our Mother,
teach us to believe, to hope, to love with you. Spe Salvi**

St. Edward Hispanic Ministry

by Jackie Smithson

The St. Edward community genuinely reflects a generous spirit of stewardship. The community includes the church, school, neighborhood and friends. They have selflessly worked together to see the beginning of a new Hispanic Catholic center in Nashville. Early in 2007, a small group of stewards purchased the building which had housed Radnor Baptist Church. They agreed to lease the building to St. Edward for its growing Hispanic ministry with the intention of later offering it for sale at a very fair price; even less than its purchase price. This was the begin-

parents and neighbors celebrated the feast day and the opening Mass of the newly established Our Lady of Guadalupe Center.

From the youngest of students to the older members of the parish, many have donated their time, talents and treasures to the Hispanic ministry. For example, the students of St. Edward School donated the supplies necessary for the religious education classes at Our Lady of Guadalupe. Crayons, scissors, paper, glue, paints and other



St. Edward students present classroom supplies to Our Lady of Guadalupe Center

rooms. The students also raised money to purchase needed items for the new

a better life for themselves and their families. Fr. Breen has made us very aware of the similarities between the Hispanic immigrants of today and the immigration of many of our ancestors to America. The acceptance and support of our ancestor immigrants by the Catholic churches and schools helped make our country the place that it is today. Stewardship is part of our history and teaching this to our young stewards is an assurance of our future.

...the St. Edward community is very mindful of giving to those who have come to this country, many with little or nothing, for a better life for themselves and their families.

ning of a tremendous joint effort that has culminated in a dream come true for the Hispanic community. On December 12, 2007, the feast day of Our Lady of Guadalupe, the St. Edward Hispanic ministry, parishioners, students,

materials were collected in a school-wide Advent project and were delivered to their new classrooms. The children even decorated their bulletin boards with festive themes for the season to welcome the students to their new

center, including holy water fonts.

Under the leadership of Fr. Joseph Breen the St. Edward community is very mindful of giving to those who have come to this country, many with little or nothing, for

Vocations – the Future of Our Church

by Tom Samoray

Imagine what it would be like if we lived in a “vocation culture.” In today’s materialistic and individualistic milieu, God’s invitation to holiness is many times hindered by negative comments, sour

attitudes, and inaccurate myths about vocations to the priesthood and consecrated religious life. Being good and faithful stewards of vocations is our baptismal responsibility. All of us can be agents of

change resulting in a paradigm shift to a culture which embraces and nurtures everyone’s call from God to holiness. Pope John Paul II also made it quite clear that all of the Christian faithful are

responsible for fostering vocations to the priesthood and religious life. “The lay faithful, and particularly catechists, teachers, educators and youth ministers, each with his or her own

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Have You Prepared a Will? If not, here is your will as prepared for you by the State of Tennessee:

Courtesy of the Diocese of Memphis

The State of Tennessee first,
 • gives my spouse only one-third of my possessions and my children the remaining two-thirds.

• appoints my spouse guardian of my children but requires a yearly account to Probate Court for money spent on them.

• directs my spouse to produce a performance bond guaranteeing proper judgment in handling, investing and spending the children's money. Each child, on reaching age 18, may take sole possession of their share of my estate. In the event my spouse becomes incapacitated physically or

mentally, my grown children, however well off in their own right, have no obligation to spend any part of their share of my estate for my spouse's care.

Second, should my spouse remarry, the State of Tennessee entitles the second spouse to one-third of everything my spouse possesses. The second spouse shall not be bound to spend any part of this share on my children's behalf.

Third, should my spouse predecease me or die while any of my children are minors,

I do not exercise my right to nominate the guardian of my children. Rather, the State of Tennessee directs my relatives and friends to select a guardian by mutual agreement. Should they fail to agree, the State of Tennessee directs the Probate Court to make a selection. If the court wishes, it may appoint a total stranger.

Fourth, should I still own my unincorporated business, the State of Tennessee directs my representative to sell all assets for their scrap value. He may attempt to sell it as a 'going concern' only if he accepts complete, personal liability.

Fifth, the State of Tennessee forgoes any legitimate avenue to lower estate taxes, preferring my estate be used for government purposes rather than for the benefit of my spouse, my children, other family, my Church or other charities.

For a booklet about preparing a will, or to discuss including the Church in your estate plans, please contact Mark Berlyn

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Vocations – the Future of Our Church

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resources and style, have great importance in the pastoral work of promoting priestly vocations...it should be at the heart of the love which each Christian feels for the Church." PDV #41

A simple example that might serve as a foundation in creating and fostering a culture of vocations is the vocation PIE. The biggest and most important slice of the vocation PIE is indeed the "P." "P" stands for prayer. Pray daily that men and women will continue to hear and respond to God's invitation to ordained priesthood or consecrated religious life. The family, the domestic church on earth, is indeed the seedbed of vocations. Our prayers can be directed to the Blessed Virgin Mary, whose "fiat" solidified her as the Model of Vocations.

Regular attendance as a family at the liturgy and frequent reception of the sacraments is putting prayer into action. The "I" in the vocation pie stands for invitation. Most of us can name at least one person whom we feel might have a calling to ordained priesthood or consecrated religious life. The invitation must be made in a prayerful and nonthreatening manner. Finally the "E" in the vocation pie stands for encouragement. We have been blessed with an abundance of men currently in formation for priesthood ordination. These men vary in age and come from various backgrounds and cultures. They are studying hundreds of miles away from their families. Whenever they receive a letter, email, or some home made cookies, they are encouraged and affirmed by

the people whom they will come back to serve.

Through the power of prayer and the work of the Holy Spirit, there appears to be a strong vocation awareness under-current slowly producing a paradigm shift. The dialogue of vocations is now reverberating around the family dinner table, in the corridors of our schools and workplace, and among members of our own presbyterate.

God continues to invite men and women to priesthood, the diaconate and consecrated religious life. We all are challenged to cooperate with Him in creating and fostering a vocation culture in our own unique and creative way within our own families and social environment. God is smiling upon us as we strive daily to

be good and faithful stewards of our time, talent and treasure.

Lord, You have always chosen individuals to work with You in a more direct way, in order to accomplish Your plan of salvation. Continue to inspire the hearts of believers that, filled with divine love, they may be moved to dedicate themselves wholly to the Kingdom.

Amen

2007 World Day of Prayer for Vocations

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Bishop's Annual Appeal

The 2008 Bishop's Annual Appeal, *Celebration of God's Gifts*, is well underway. Through the first quarter of the year nearly \$750,000 has been contributed by thousands of Middle Tennessee parishioners toward the goal of raising \$2.27 million. In 2007 the people of the diocese responded quite generously in support of diocesan pastoral services by contributing just over \$2.3 million; eclipsing the \$2.16 million goal.

Participants in the appeal are still getting used to receiving their payment envelopes directly from the diocese as opposed to in their parish monthly envelope packets. It is intended that everyone will receive an envelope at least quarterly from the diocese in order to participate.

Another change is coming; this time in the appeal timing. For many years the diocesan Bishop's Annual Appeal has been held in the fall for the following year. Beginning in 2009, the appeal will be held

early in the same calendar year. Please note the following:

The dates for the 2009
Bishop's Annual Appeal are:

Appeal Sunday, Feb. 8, 2009
Pledge Sunday, Feb. 15, 2009
Follow-up Sun., Feb. 22, 2009

One of the primary reasons for this change is that many parishes hold their stewardship appeals in the fall. Others have moved theirs to the spring. Holding the diocesan and parish efforts separately, even by a few weeks, enables each to have the attention and focus it needs and deserves.

As a result of the change in timing of the appeal, the pledge collection period will be reduced from 12 months to eight. It is anticipated that this will help to re-

duce costs and help eliminate some of the confusion that had sometimes resulted from the appeal overlapping the payment period of the previous year's appeal.

