



Stewardship of Our Earth

~by Serena

Inside this issue:

Stewardship of Our Earth	1
On Stewardship Spirituality: Reflection, Prayer & Planning	2
Stewardship Prayer	2
Profiles in Stewardship: St Vincent DePaul Society	3
Who Do You Know	4
A Light Note	4

All that we have and all that we are is a gift from God.

It seems so appropriate that the Earth should be bursting forth with new life, as we celebrate the Easter Season – the season of life. Spring has indeed, sprung! The bright yellow forsythia shrubs, the flowering white pear and pink cherry trees – even the lilacs and azaleas are in bloom. Tulips, hyacinth, dianthus and iris brighten the front of homes and storefronts. As I drive along the road, the strong breeze sends tree blossoms flurrying past my windshield, and except for the warm sunshine, they resemble giant snowflakes. The moment leaves me nearly giddy! After a grey winter, I do so love the Spring!

April 22nd was Earth Day, a day designated to raise awareness about environmental issues. What began as an anti-pollution protest in 1970 has become the largest environmental movement with more than 1 billion participants worldwide each year. Originally the issues were large scale (clean air and water); now the focus is individual (recycle, reuse). Of course, with Earth Day falling on Good Friday this year, many of us may have missed it. That doesn't mean we need to wait for next year. Every day is an opportunity to do something for the environment. The big idea though is to use this day to do something ecologically important, to make a commitment or a lifestyle change that will improve the environment. This is a tenet of Stewardship Spirituality.

During his papacy, Pope John Paul II spoke extensively on our responsibility for the environment, calling it our Stewardship over Nature. At a UN Center for the Environment meeting, he said, *"it is a requirement of our human dignity, and therefore a serious responsibility... In this way, the stewardship over nature, entrusted by God to man, will not be guided by short-sightedness or selfish pursuits, rather it will take into account the fact that all created goods are directed to the good of all humanity."*



Stewardship of Time

Evening Prayer

Pause for one minute each night at 9PM and join those who pray for the safety of the United States, our troops, our citizens and for a return to a Godly nation.

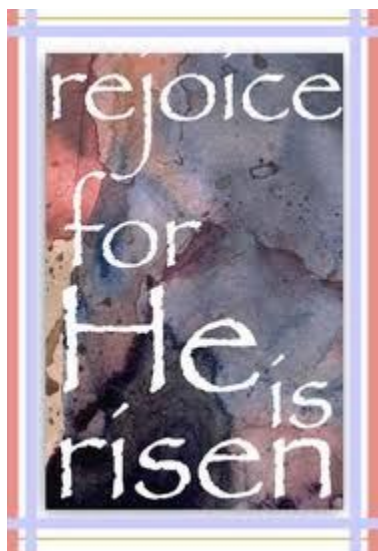
Reaching Out to God in our Need

True stewardship spirituality, with regard to the planet, requires changes in human actions. Our religious tradition has always urged restraint and moderation, so we must not allow our desire to possess more material things to overtake our concern for the basic needs of people and the environment. Pope John Paul II linked protecting the environment to "authentic human ecology," which can overcome "structures of sin" and which promotes both human dignity and respect for creation.¹ Technological innovation can help make possible options that can lead us to a more environmentally benign energy path. Changes in lifestyle based on traditional moral virtues can ease the way to a sustainable and equitable world economy in which sacrifice will no longer be an unpopular concept. For many of us, a life less focused on material gain many

“Everything that the Father gives me will come to me, and I will not reject anyone who comes to me, because I came down from heaven not to do my own will but the will of the one who sent me. And this is the will of the one who sent me, that I should not lose anything of what he gave me, but that I should raise it on the last day. For this is the will of my Father.” - John 6:35

Stewardship Prayer

Creator God,
Life is your gift to me.
Through Baptism,
you invite me to share the gift of my life
in service to others.
Be with me
as I choose each day
to show your Presence in our world.
Give me the courage and generosity
to respond to your love, to your call.
I pray especially for those
who serve you in ministry
throughout the parishes of Long Island.
May we bring the Good News
to those in need.
Keep us close to you.
Open the minds and hearts
of many others
-- men, women, and young people --
that they may accept your challenge
to build the Kingdom in our parishes.
We ask this prayer through Christ
our Lord.
Amen.



Reflection, Prayer and Planning

Preparing a tax return is an interesting exercise. It stirs up feelings of anxiety, annoyance and even anticipation. It is a time when we pull together all the details of the past year to determine how we fared financially. Was it a good year or a bad year? What did I actually do with my treasure?

It is also a perfect time to assess the results of our work for the Lord and consider whether we've made the most of our time, talent, experience and treasure. Did our life and work reap eternal results? It's a good time to think through and make changes in our goals and plans for this year.

Perhaps we can re-appraise our giving to God. He has blessed us with time, experiences, resources, talents, spiritual gifts and a network of people. Did we have an attitude of gratitude last year? Have we used our income to help to evangelize and disciple and feed people around the world?

“How much time did I spend in prayer? How many people did I pray for? How many people have been disciplined through the ministry I'm involved with?” How many people have been trained and challenged to serve?

Going through our papers and invoices carefully, we can become aware of how we have spent our time and money. Take time to pray and plan for this year. How will you best use your God-given time, talent and treasure during this year?

—excerpted from “Everyday life with God” as on www.albertasynod.ca

***Rejoice and Celebrate the Season of Easter
Christ is Risen! Alleluia!
Reach out in prayer to God.***

Profiles in Stewardship: OLM's St. Vincent dePaul Society

The Our Lady of Mercy St. Vincent dePaul Conference is comprised of women and men who have joined together to minister to the needy and suffering in and around our Parish Community. They are our neighbors.

We are committed to bear witness to Jesus Christ by our actions in serving the poor in whom we encounter the suffering Christ. As St. Vincent wrote: "The poor are our masters; they are our kings; we must obey them. It is no exaggeration to call them this, since our Lord is in the poor."

As Vincentians, we witness our Catholic Faith and the commandment of Love by dedicating our time and talent and reaching out to touch our neighbors who are suffering; most notable through home visits by Vincentian pair teams. Our resources are the generous donations of our parish poor boxes and food collections. It is our honor to distribute the food and gifts that our Parish has donated at Thanksgiving and Christmas time.

A powerful working relationship with the Parish Services Office enables the Conference to reach out to those in need—confidentially and discretely. We provide person-to-person assistance to those who need immediate help with issues ranging from food, financial aid, emergency shelter, public assistance information and referrals to a compassionate ear, company and even some handyman skills. To this end, we are fortunate to be able to tap the talents of available parishioners, including our young people. Each year since 1991, our Conference has recognized our Parish School and Religious Education 8th Grade students who, through their actions have demonstrated the Works of Mercy.

During the past year, we have helped families pay electric and gas bills – in many cases, those utilities were in danger of being turned off for non-payment. One family who had suffered the loss of a child, desperately needed auto repairs in order to have transportation for several family members to work. Our conference was able to provide a set of new tires—balanced and aligned—and provided the family with a safe vehicle so that they might continue to work and obtain the necessities of family living.

Inspired by Gospel values, the *Vincentians* seek to grow spiritually by carrying out their mission ever mindful of the dignity of the men and women they serve because, in them, the *Vincentians* see the face of Christ.

Mission: Hearing the cry of the poor...responding to their needs...advocating for their rights.



The Society of St. Vincent de Paul is an international organization of laymen and women who seek in a spirit of justice and charity to help the poor, the needy and the disadvantaged through practical works of charity. In the tradition of its founder, *Frederic Ozanam*, and patron, *St. Vincent de Paul*, the members of the Society assist the poor through person-to-person service (home visits) providing them with material aid, emotional support and spiritual comfort - whatever is necessary to empower them to become self-sufficient.

*We are the
Hands of Christ*



Helping Out—What it Takes:

Each year the OLM St. Vincent de Paul Conference expends approximately \$17,000 to \$20,000 helping families in need. This is in addition to the furniture, linens and other family living essentials. Some of this funding comes through the parish poor box collections, however, our poor boxes do not provide

nearly enough to meet the needs of our fellow parishioners. In the past, the Parish has occasionally supplemented our Conference finances so that we may not have to turn any family away, but we have no steady resource. While you can always support our work through poor box contributions, you can also make a check payable to the Society of St. Vincent de Paul and drop it into the collection baskets or mail it or bring it to the Rectory. If you think you might like to share your time and talent with the Society, please call the Rectory at 931-4351 or email at therectory@olmrcc.com.

Our Lady of Mercy eNewsletter



OUR LADY OF MERCY

Hicksville, New York 11801
516-931-4351
Visit us on the web at
www.OurLadyofMercy.org

Sign up for our
Email Newsletter

OLM eNewsletter Staff:

Father Rich Kammerer, Managing Editor

Serena Perrotta, Editor

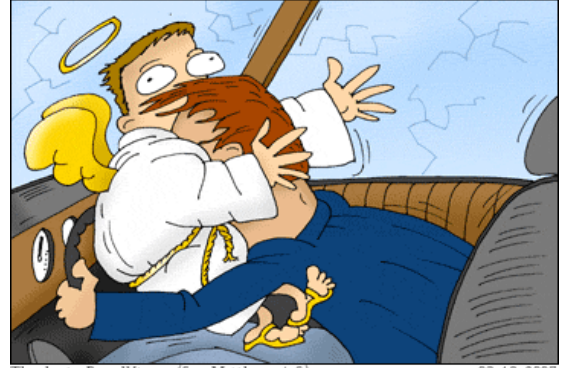
Look for us again next month as we bring you updates on the events and people in our parish community.

Please direct all inquiries via email to therectory@olmrcc.com.

Are you receiving this from a friend, or know someone else who would like to—send us your email to sign up today and find out what else you may be missing!

On a Light Note:

REVERENDFUN.COM COPYRIGHT G4, INC.



Thanks to Pam Winn (See Matthew 4:6) 03-18-2005

THINGS EASED UP ON GUARDIAN ANGELS AFTER
AIR BAGS WERE INVENTED

Who Do You Know??

This eNewsletter focuses on Stewardship Spirituality in our lives and in our parish. Who do you know that is living a stewardship life? We would love to hear about it, so let us know.

Also, we are looking for a writer, a reporter, someone who would like to talk to their fellow parishioners and write the Profiles in Stewardship column to tell how people in our parish are living Stewardship Spirituality. Please share your gifts! Contact us at therectory@olmrcc.com.

Stewardship of Our Earth—continued from page 1

remind us that we *are* more than what we *have*. Rejecting the false promises of excessive or conspicuous consumption can even allow more time for family, friends and civic responsibilities. A renewed sense of sacrifice and restraint could make an essential contribution to addressing global climate change.²

How are you a Steward over Nature?

There are so many ways that each of us can make a difference in this beautiful world that God has entrusted to our care. You are probably doing some of them already. Whenever you recycle cans and bottles, or reuse shopping bags, you are taking care of God's gift of this planet. If you use compact fluorescent bulbs, light dimmers and power strips, you are a steward of Earth. Make a list of five things you can commit to do to improve your environment not just for yourself, but, as Pope John Paul II said, for future generations, as a Steward of Nature.

Beyond the Recycle Bin – Starting Small

Repurpose items you no longer use – or donate it, don't store it!

Reduce your carbon footprint – unplug appliances not in use.

Walk or share rides - and save gas, too!

Buy reusable instead of disposable items.

Make one "Earth-friendly" shopping choice each week

¹ John Paul II, *On the Hundredth Anniversary of Rerum Novarum*, no. 32

² US Catholic Bishops, *Global Climate Change: A Plea for Dialogue, Prudence and the Common Good*, 2001