



Caring with Wisdom



Saint Andrew Parish
2025 Annual Stewardship Appeal

November 2024

Dear Parishioners,

In just a few weeks, we will once again celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation with over 50 young parishioners from Saint Andrew and rejoice at the strengthening of the gifts of the Holy Spirit in their lives. I am struck by the importance of all of the gifts the Holy Spirit endows upon those who receive the Sacrament, but especially the gifts of Knowledge and Wisdom.

The two gifts work hand in hand as we navigate many different challenges in life. When we are blessed with Knowledge, we can often see the need before us and identify an erroneous opinion or behavior. But that is where Wisdom begins her work. Wisdom helps us to discern how to respond to the knowledge we have and act accordingly through new insight.

In our annual Season of Stewardship, I am challenging every parishioner to call upon the Spirit's gifts of Knowledge and Wisdom to make a commitment to advance the mission of Saint Andrew Parish through the stewardship of their TIME, TALENT, and TREASURE. I ask that you make a demonstration of this commitment by completing the annual commitment card that is included with this brochure.

It begins by seeking Knowledge. Start by examining your own gifts and the needs that surround you. Add to this inventory a deepening knowledge about the needs of Saint Andrew which can be found in this brochure and in our weekly online bulletin. These resources celebrate the good news that Saint Andrew's has survived significant challenges over these last few years!

And then I invite you to be guided by Wisdom. With all that is before you, how can you help Saint Andrew not merely survive, but thrive as a parish community? How can the gift of Wisdom inspire the generous use of your TIME, TALENT, and TREASURE as we journey together?

Please know that your contributions, no matter how small, will make a difference. Together, we can continue to build a stronger and more loving community at Saint Andrew and beyond.

Thank you for your continued support and dedication to our parish.

God bless,

Rev. Sergio Romo
Rev. Sergio Romo, Pastor



Knowledge and Wisdom

The reflections on these pages are offered for you to reflect upon in making your own commitment of TIME, TALENT, and TREASURE for the upcoming year.

TREASURE

A recent study funded by Lilly Endowment Inc. and led by the Hartford Institute for Religion found that across the nation, religious institutions who find themselves in “fair” to “good” economic health have a common trend since the pandemic. They have generally been able to maintain a static level of economic support but with fewer donors who have given more. The biggest concern in the study was that the static giving levels did not address the rising costs of inflation. Churches have only been able to remain financially stable through austerity.

This trend mirrors what has happened at Saint Andrew Parish. Numerous parishioners have relocated to places across the country and the hole left in Saint Andrew’s financial support has been met through fewer households giving more to make up for the need. An important question as we welcome more and more new households to the parish is to ask if their stewardship of TREASURE can help us move from surviving to thriving?

It is important for parishioners to know that their financial generosity is used with great care in advancing the mission of Saint Andrew. It is important to know that the cost for the parish to offer each Sunday Mass (musicians, priest, electricity, etc) is over \$600 per Mass and that does not include the cost of the building structure and its maintenance. It is important to know that Saint Andrew consistently receives \$8,000 less per month in financial contributions than is required to meet our standard operations.

What we pray for is wisdom in knowing how to respond to these challenges. Who can we invite to join us on our mission? What personal sacrifices can each of us make to ensure the vitality of our faith community? In what ways can we use the resources that we are given more efficiently and respectfully? How can we move Saint Andrew Parish from surviving to thriving?



REFLECTION: What is your responsibility to supporting the ministries of Saint Andrew Parish? What commitment of TREASURE can you make? Statistically, many households have enjoyed increased wages and salaries since the pandemic. If you have been so blessed, how have you shared those blessings to God’s church?

TIME

It takes TIME to be in relationship with anyone and that includes God. As Christians, we know God is always near to us, but we are not always mindful or open to God's presences. Our remedy to this is to make time for God through prayer and sacred action. This is done both privately in personal prayer and meditation and communally as we gather for Mass, the Rosary, devotions, and service to others.

According to the Pew Research Center, the rate at which U.S. Catholics attend Mass is 16% lower than it was before the pandemic. Saint Andrew has had a more significant drop (23%), even as it has shown year over year growth. In 2019, Saint Andrew averaged 747 parishioners attending Mass per weekend and had an drop of nearly 50% in the first year after the pandemic. From 2022 to 2023 attendance grew by 15% and from 2023 to 2024 it grew by an additional 12% to where it now stands at 505 attendees per weekend. In the last two years, Saint Andrew Parish has had a steady increase in wedding applications, baptisms, and newly registered parishioners.

What we pray for is wisdom in knowing how to use the gift of our TIME well. Making a commitment to pray, to attend Mass, and spend time with one another in our journey with God will allow Saint Andrew to continue to grow.



REFLECTION: What is your faith journey like? What commitment of TIME do you make for your faith? Do you take for granted the resources of your parish community? How might your commitment to be more involved lead to a sense of transformation in your own life?

TALENT

Volunteering your TALENTS at church is a powerful way to make a difference in your community and enrich your own life. Sharing your gifts not only strengthens your faith but also benefits your overall well-being. Studies show that volunteers tend to be happier, healthier, and live longer. They experience reduced stress, improved mental health, and a greater sense of purpose. Saint Andrew Parish is blessed with many volunteers who experience this grace on a regular basis.

Unfortunately, since the relocation of many parishioners since the pandemic, many key volunteer roles are left unfilled. Whether it is serving in our liturgies as a lector or greeter or on an organizing committee to improve our social life and our charitable actions, there is a need for your particular TALENTS to advance Saint Andrew's mission.

REFLECTION: What is your responsibility to the future of Saint Andrew Parish? What TALENTS do you possess that could be used to the service of one of several callings? Do your gifts lend themselves toward the service of liturgical ministry, religious education of children and adults, construction, maintenance, finance, or administration? What can you do in the next year to ensure Saint Andrew continues its mission for years to come?

Make a Commitment to Stewardship

Making a commitment to stewardship is an expectation placed before every registered household at Saint Andrew Parish on an annual basis. Every household is on a journey that changes from year to year. Finances, health, and family needs all invite a prayerful reconsideration of “What is God asking me to do this year?”

For this reason, we ask that you complete the response card every year. Your commitment card should be returned by placing it in the collection basket at Mass starting the weekend of November 10, 2024 and before December 8, 2024.

Keep in mind that the response card is not a contractual agreement but rather an exercise in thoughtful and intentional stewardship by all members of the parish.

You may also choose to complete your stewardship commitment online at www.standrew.org/stewardship or using the following QR code.



STEWARDSHIP PRAYER 2025

Oh Lord, giver of life and source of all goodness, yours is “the earth and its fullness; the world and those who dwell in it.”

Overflowing from your generosity, we enjoy every gift that has been given to us.

Help us to grow in knowledge and appreciation of these gifts, as well as the needs that are placed before us:

needs of our households, our neighborhoods, our city, nation, world, and church.

Bestow upon us your wisdom

that we might be generous stewards

to care for each in proper measure

by witnessing to your love in all we do.

Bless all of our efforts

and especially our humble response of stewardship which we make in your name,

through Christ, our Lord.

AMEN

