

Joe,

The question the leaders and finance teams are asking about financial increases is very typical. I want to encourage you to impress on them that stewardship is a not a short term financial program but a long term spiritual process that builds on itself year after year. As I'm sure you remember, Msgr. McGread and the other speakers hit on this over and over at the conference. You're probably already communicating this to the leadership but I thought that it was important to mention it.

With that said, the parishes we work with do see significant increases in Time, Talent and Treasure in the first year and then each subsequent year. These increases vary from parish to parish for many reasons (past history, current situation, recent financial picture, commitment from the pastor, lay leadership, staff, if the parish takes our advice or not, etc.) so we do not tell parishes they are going to see "x" increases in each of the three areas.

In dollar terms, we have seen first year financial giving increases range from \$65,000 for a very small, rural, poor parish to \$500,000 for a large, wealthy parish. When we look at a baseline we see an annual average increase of around 15% per year. This ranges from parishes who do not follow our advice and don't do their part (typically 10%-12% annual increases), to those parishes who are very proactive and truly embrace stewardship as a way of life (anywhere from 15% - 35% annual increases). We have seen the largest financial increases in parishes where, prior to our involvement, there is a strong spiritual foundation and commitment to prayer.

I look forward to getting to know more about each parish in the co-op and I'm confident that we can help you strengthen the positive things that are taking place. Let me know if you have any other questions.

In Christ,

Eric McArdle  
Catholic Stewardship Consultants  
*Developing Stewardship as a Way of Life*