

Stewardship: Rebuild My Church

What Catholic stewardship is (don't reduce it to "fundraising")

In the pastoral letter, [Stewardship: A Disciple's Response](#), the U.S. Bishops teach that stewardship is an expression of discipleship that changes how we live; ***once we choose to be disciples of Jesus, "stewardship is not an option."*** It is about receiving everything as a gift and returning it—our time, talents, and treasures—for the Kingdom. This is the spirituality that powers a mission-first parish.

Apostolic parishes "go forth." Pope Francis called for a "missionary option" capable of transforming everything—customs, schedules, structures—for evangelization rather than self-preservation. This transformation is not just a possibility, but a promise that Rebuild My Church holds for our parishes.

Vatican II emphasizes the crucial role of the laity in the apostolate. Through Baptism and Confirmation, they are assigned to the apostolate, with the Eucharist nourishing the charity that is the soul of all apostolates. Stewardship awakens and orders the lay apostolate, highlighting the collaborative nature of the church's mission.

What Rebuild My Church is asking of every parish.

Bishop Battersby is inviting all of us, especially our parish leaders, to shift from maintenance to mission—an ongoing, Spirit-guided process of listening and restructuring so parishes become "fully alive on mission." Rebuild My Church highlights seven indicators of such parishes (Vibrant Sunday Mass; Stable and Healthy Leadership; Cultures of Discipleship and Accompaniment; Missionary Outreach; Faith Formation; Stewardship).

Understanding the rationale behind the Rebuild My Church initiative is essential. The document '[Looking at the Numbers](#)' explains why we need to re-imagine parish structures, such as transitioning to more stable, long-term pastors, if we genuinely want mission-first leadership and results.

Seven Indicators: How Stewardship Moves a Parish From Maintenance to Mission

➤ **Vibrant Sunday Mass**

Stewardship forms hosts, greeters, musicians, lectors, and sacristans as missionaries of hospitality and beauty—and even influences the Mass schedule to prevent priests from being overburdened (Rebuild My Church recommends that each priest celebrate no more than three Sunday or Vigil Masses), allowing them to be more present and active in the community the rest of the week.

➤ **Stable and Healthy Leadership**

Stewardship of budgets for fair wages and realistic workloads; it also supports structural changes that enable long-tenured pastors, with strong collaboration among clergy, deacons, staff, and volunteers, so that priests can concentrate on apostolic ministry.

➤ **A Culture of Discipleship**

Stewardship invites members to prayer, conversion, and charism (talent)-based service, transforming “volunteering” into formation, fellowship, and mission (cf. Acts 2:42), rather than just checking off tasks or feeling good about oneself.

➤ **A Culture of Accompaniment**

Stewardship involves providing resources, listening, mentoring, and creating ‘on-ramps’ for seekers and returnees—so that accompaniment is a standard, funded, and trained parish practice.

➤ **Missionary Outreach**

Stewardship allocates resources, including people and money, to reach the poor, sick, addicted, inactive members, and those who have not yet come to know Jesus, extending beyond just the parish community.

➤ **Faith Formation**

Stewardship funds adult formation that begins with evangelization and meets people on the path of discipleship, as well as providing adequate formation for children and youth, so families grow together as missionary disciples.

➤ **Stewardship**

Entails missionary parishes asking members to discern baptismal gifts; pastors to organize resources for optimal engagement and community; volunteers being sufficient or plentiful; tithing supporting a justly compensated staff capable of evangelization (beyond simple self-preservation). That is, stewardship aligns budgets and people toward sending.

Simply put, stewardship is the fuel behind funding, staffing, training, and launching the apostolate—while Rebuild My Church offers the dashboard to guide it. With this all-in-one

support system, parish leaders can confidently face the challenges and opportunities of the initiative.

Stewardship and Rebuild My Church Initiative:

A 12-Month Parish Playbook Example

Months 1–2 — Rebuild My Church start-up

- Host a parish listening session aligned with [Rebuild My Church](#) and preach/teach about stewardship (it's not just “fundraising or financial support”) as discipleship. Focus on examining your parish's status on the [7 Indicators](#).
- Launch a [Charism Gift Inventory](#) to identify charisms, availability, and apostolic interests among parishioners. (Map results to the [7 Indicators](#).)

Months 3–4 — Mission-first budgeting and roles

- Adopt a Mission Budget: re-code every line to match one of the [7 Indicators](#); aim to increase spending on missionary work, outreach, and formation while protecting just wages. (A practical benchmark many parishes use is to grow the portion of the budget dedicated to evangelization and formation each year.)
- Adjust the Mass schedule to an appropriate time and frequency and reassign clergy and staff time for accompaniment and outreach.

Months 5–6 — Build the accompaniment pipeline.

- Train small teams in hospitality, listening, and mentoring; create simple on-ramps from Sunday hospitality to small groups, then to service, and finally to leadership.
- Start two outward-facing ministries (for example, homebound and bereavement; young families/newcomers) with designated leaders and budgets.

Months 7–9 — Send and serve

- Organize commission teams based on charisms (mercy, teaching, leadership, intercession, etc.) for missionary outreach outside the parish; keep track of contacts and invitations.
- Align school/OCIA/youth efforts so that formation leads to missionary discipleship, emphasizing service, testimonies, and invitations.

Months 10–12 — Evaluate and scale

- Review leading indicators (see below) with Finance and Pastoral Councils; reallocate funds and time for the next cycle.
- Celebrate testimonies at Mass; renew the commitment of time, talents, and treasure as a unified act of stewardship and worship (John 20:21 sending).

Governance and finance guardrails that keep you apostolic

- Mission Budgeting: Every dollar and staff hour is linked to one of the [7 Indicators](#), especially Missionary Outreach and Accompaniment. (This also justifies staff levels and just wages as mission-critical.)
- One leadership table: Stewardship Committee and Finance and Pastoral Councils meet quarterly to review Rebuild My Church's indicators and mission metrics (not only income and expenses).
- Diocesan alignment: Use the Diocesan Annual Appeal as a catechetical opportunity: "Fueling Missions of Hope" funds diocesan offices that form, accompany, and send out missionary disciples—that's the diocesan engine for the local pivot.

Metrics that show you've moved beyond maintenance

Leading indicators (monthly/quarterly)

- Issued new invitations ([Alpha](#)-like discovery, small groups, service) and conducted follow-ups.
- Accompaniment relationships started (mentors/mentees)
- Charisms discerned and matched to apostolates; team leaders commissioned.
- Budgeted staff and volunteer hours for Missionary Outreach and Accompaniment versus internal administration.
- Mass hospitality touches: greeters connect with newcomers and follow up within 48 hours.

Lagging indicators (semi-annual/annual)

- OCIA enrollments, returning Catholics, and adult baptisms/confirmations
- Sacramental practices like confession and Eucharistic adoration increase due to outreach.
- High Volunteer Participation in Evangelization Ministries
- Offertory stability and growth alongside increasing mission expenditures (a healthy fruit of discipleship)

Quick wins (next 60 days)

1. Preach the "why": Rebuild My Church and stewardship as discipleship. End every announcement with, "Who can you invite this week?"
2. Reassign staff time: allocate 6–8 pastoral hours per week per clergy for accompaniment and outreach.

3. Hospitality reset during Sunday Mass (name tags, welcome script, follow-up cards within 48 hours).
4. Charism discovery evening and sign-ups that result in team formation within two weeks.
5. Budget re-label (no new funds required): color-code lines to the [7 Indicators](#); show parishioners where their giving already fuels the mission—and what the next step unlocks.

The theological “why” (for your bulletin or website)

- “As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” Every baptized person is called to be sent; parishes exist to form and send them.
- Stewardship is a disciple’s way of life, not just a program; it transforms gratitude into ministry.
- The laity’s apostolate is vital; the Eucharist fuels it. Our structures, schedules, and budgets must mirror that.
- Pope Francis called for an urgent ecclesial renewal—prioritizing a missionary approach over mere maintenance.

Bottom line

In the Rebuild My Church vision, stewardship is the practical spirituality that transforms a parish into an apostolic community: it identifies and orders gifts (people, money, time) for sending, not just serving. If you align your preaching, schedules, staff time, and budgets with the [7 Indicators](#), you’ll notice the shift: more invitation, more accompaniment, more sending, and more fruit.