

## Stewardship at St. Veronica

For Catholics, a parish is a second home, a spiritual address that at St. Veronica is shared by more than 2,400 families.

While the Sunday liturgy is the weekly focus of that spiritual life, the parish is so much more than that. For most of us, it's the site of our journey through life, milestones that begin with baptism and follow through the years with the early sacraments of First Confession, First Communion, Confirmation, marriage and the funeral at the end of life.

Like all homes, the parish is a place where we join to celebrate our joys and come together to share our sorrows. It's where we can learn more about our religion and live our faith through service to others, but also a place to socialize, share activities and meet new people.

But like any family, a parish only works if everyone shares the load and helps to the best of their abilities.

Stewardship is a word the church has begun using in recent years to describe that shared responsibility, but it's really an old concept. In the Bible, Jesus talks about the three stewards entrusted with their master's wealth and how they handle what they had been given.

Stewardship calls for us all to use our time, talent and treasure in service to our Catholic community. Every day, we see people who have responded to that call by serving as ushers, lectors and Eucharistic ministers, singing in the choir, running the hospitality after Mass, taking their places at Eucharistic Adoration, working in the parish food bank and joining in the good works done by the parish's many clubs and organizations, such as the Men's Club and Women's Guild.

All these groups always are looking for more people willing to share their time and talent.

But like any other family, St. Veronica has bills to pay and, as everyone knows, nothing is getting cheaper.

Keeping the lights on in the parish buildings and on the parish grounds costs money, and the bills for water, garbage and maintenance are the same ones every family faces, only much bigger.

Each week, the Sunday collection includes nearly \$2,000 in one-dollar bills. Much of that represents people dropping the same dollar or two in the collection basket they've given for years. We're all creatures of habit and too often don't stop to think that the same gasoline and heating prices that have risen so steeply for our family over the years has gone up for our parish family as well.

Don't worry, there's no tollgate going up in front of the church. There are people in the parish who struggle to give even that dollar or two and that's a grace from them to all of us.

But for most of us, boosting the weekly contribution to \$5 or \$10 wouldn't be a budget buster. It's not much more than the cost of a latte or two each week or a lunch at McDonald's.

Being a member of a parish is something we decide to do and the decision of how best to support that parish is one each family must make. But please take a moment this week and prayerfully consider how you can best contribute to St. Veronica with your time, talents and treasure.

St. Veronica doesn't get money from the Vatican or the Archdiocese to pay its bills. Almost every dollar comes from the collection basket.

But the money we put into each week's regular collection doesn't go to Rome or San Francisco, either. Every dollar stays at St. Veronica. At our home.



- John Wildermuth on behalf of the Pastoral Council