

Stewardship and Ice Cream
Sunday, November 9, 2014
Speaker: Kevin Bean

A little girl was given a dollar to go get an ice cream. The minister happened to be calling as she went out the door with her dollar to get the ice cream. “Dear,” he asked gently, “shouldn’t you give that dollar to the missionaries?” This little girl, quite precocious in a spiritual sense, answered without missing a beat, “You know I’ve thought about that,” she said. “I think I’ll give it to the ice cream man and let him give it to the missionaries.”

That’s a cute story and one that has us lighten up a bit when it comes to discerning the proper balance in our lives of saving and spending for ourselves *and* giving to others.

So, here’s another story some of you may have heard involving ice cream which has us look at that balance some more—here’s a short tale of one person’s toxic giving and another’s thanks giving.

In the days when an ice cream sundae cost a lot less than it does now, a nine-year-old boy went into an ice cream parlor and took a seat. “How much is an ice cream sundae?” he asked. “A dollar,” the waitress replied. The boy looked down and opened his hand. He silently counted his coins and did some quick figuring in his head, and asked, “How much for just a dish of plain ice cream?” “Seventy-five cents,” the waitress replied impatiently. Again, he turned away, opened his hand, counted the coins and did some more mental number crunching. “I’ll have a dish of plain ice cream,” the boy said. “Flavor?” the waitress brusquely asked. “Umm...chocolate, please,” the boy replied. The waitress brought the ice cream, took the boy’s money, and went off quickly to her next customer. A few minutes later she returned. The dish was empty; the boy was gone. But what she saw cut her to the heart. There, next to the empty ice cream dish, were two nickels, a dime and five pennies. She realized the boy had ordered the plain ice cream in order to have enough money for her tip.

The boy discerned the proportion of what he had that he was going to give, at the beginning, before he enjoyed his ice cream.

So, what is Stewardship? Stewardship is not as much about the needs of the church, as it is discovering *our need* to give - lovingly. This is our opportunity to deepen our relationship with God. He blesses us with many talents, and we share the results of these blessings with him. Stewardship is an important way that we show our commitment to each other, in our parish family and in the community and in the larger world. Simply put, stewardship is a way for us to discover ourselves as givers, and thus strengthen our faith, our hope and our love.

So, please consider prayerfully, thankfully, lovingly and proportionally your pledge to the parish.