



TIME · TALENT · TREASURE

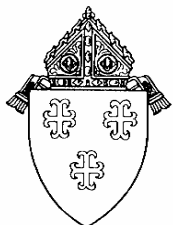
A

GUIDE

FOR PLANNING

AND ORGANIZING

YOUR MINISTRY FAIR



PREPARED BY:

**THE OFFICE OF STEWARDSHIP & DEVELOPMENT
DIOCESE OF PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND**

THE PURPOSE OF THE TIME AND TALENT MINISTRY FAIR

A Time and Talent Ministry Fair is held to generate awareness, enthusiasm, and involvement among parishioners, ultimately increasing parish ministry. It is an annual celebration of the work of the Church, a special event that recognizes the importance of all volunteer efforts. The Ministry Fair is a wonderful way for parishioners to meet and gather information about the various ministries, committees, organizations, and educational opportunities that are available within the parish community. Each ministry is showcased through the use of a display at a table or booth.

The Fair serves to educate parishioners about stewardship while also helping them grow in their relationship with the Lord. This festive event allows parishioners to ask questions, discern their many gifts and talents, and learn how they can share their gifts within a particular parish ministry. For those already involved in ministry, parishioners are afforded an opportunity to recommit their time and talent in order to carry out the parish's mission statement and help build the Kingdom of God on earth. A Ministry Fair also encourages the practice of stewardship of time and talent by fostering a deeper realization about our Baptismal call to be followers and disciples of Jesus Christ.

WHEN TO PLAN FOR YOUR TIME AND TALENT MINISTRY FAIR

Choosing the time of year is critical when planning for your Time and Talent Ministry Fair. Ideal times vary from parish to parish; however, be cautious and avoid seasons where weekly attendance is low or where liturgical occurrences take precedence. Also, avoid planning for the Fair during the heightened travel months during the summer or winter month excursions to warmer climates. For many Rhode Island parishes, the weeks prior to Lent or the fall have proven to be effective periods to begin the journey. Remember also that the weekend chosen to officially commence your stewardship journey should be planned well in advance to allow for an extensive public relations campaign throughout the parish community. Allowing 4 - 6 months of preparation will afford you enough time to reach all parties and effectively plan the journey.

SOME CREATIVE IDEAS TO CONSIDER WHEN PLANNING AND ORGANIZING

- 1.) **Select a general theme for the entire Ministry Fair** - Some suggestions include:

Come Follow Me

Christ Be Our Light

Growing In Grace

We Walk by Faith

Light From Light

Serve One Another

Spirit Alive

Gifted by God

Go Spread The Good News

Disciples Respond

Gather Us Together

Building God's Kingdom

Gift of Hope

Renewed in Christ

Trust in the Lord

- 2.) **Have a contest** - Encourage each ministry to design their own booths/tables. Have parishioners vote for the best and most creative display.
- 3.) **Award prizes** - Draft an entry form listing all parish ministries. Parishioners take this form with them to each ministry booth/table. Upon visiting each ministry booth/table, the parishioner will receive a checkmark. If all ministries are checked off on the form, that parishioner will automatically be entered in a drawing for a prize presented at the conclusion of the weekend celebration.
- 4.) **Paint a face or draw a picture** - Devote a section of the Ministry Fair to children. Young boys and girls love face painting and coloring religious scenes with crayons and markers.

TEN STEPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL TIME AND TALENT MINISTRY FAIR

- 1.) **Talk with your pastor** - Ask for his support through pulpit announcements and directed homilies on stewardship.
- 2.) **Form a committee with sufficient volunteers** - Be sure to delegate responsibilities regarding the planning and organizing of each aspect of the Ministry Fair.
- 3.) **Contact leaders of all parish ministries** – Encourage their participation in the Ministry Fair. Ensure that every table/booth has someone from that ministry who is able to answer any questions. Share the theme and encourage them to be creative in decorating their booth. Work with them and provide all the necessary materials to create vibrant “eye-catching” displays (*please refer to Appendix A*).
- 4.) **Establish a timeline** - Work backwards from the date of your Stewardship Weekend to plan for monthly activities while creating a “to-do” list. Remember not to plan your Ministry Fair during times when weekly attendance is low (the months of September, October, and November usually draw the largest audience).
- 5.) **Provide a brief description of each time and talent opportunity** - This will enable parishioners to discern whether their gifts will be a good fit within this particular parish ministry. Typed and placed on each respective ministry table, these descriptions can describe the ministry’s mission and explain how interested parishioners can participate.
- 6.) **Provide a guest book at each ministry table/booth** – This will serve as a way of contacting those individuals who are interested in learning more about this particular parish ministry or who wish to become involved (*please refer to Appendix # B*).
- 7.) **Promote the Ministry Fair** – Utilize bulletin and pulpit announcements (*please refer to Appendix C*), homilies, posters, banners, brochures, and flyers around the church, school, and parish center. Have a photographer on hand – displaying the photos after the Ministry Fair will help publicize the event as well as peeking the interest of those who were unable to attend.
- 8.) **Serve refreshments** - What better way to welcome and show hospitality to your guests? This is very important!
- 9.) **Contact and thank stewards** – Through a letter, postcard, E-mail, or telephone, be sure to contact those parishioners who have indicated an interest in sharing their God-given gifts of time and talent (*please refer to Appendix D*).
- 10.) **Pray, Pray, Pray** – Believe in the power of prayer for the success of your Ministry Fair (*please refer to Appendix E*).

APPENDIX C – Sample Bulletin and Pulpit Announcements

STEWARDSHIP FAIR TODAY!

Is God calling you to share your faith, time and talents? Please stop by if you are thinking about ways to share your gifts of time and talent or would just like more information on what is going on at Saint Alfred Parish. The Fair will showcase all our parish ministries and you will be able to see how your particular talents can be used to serve others. Something for all ages - bring the kids!

Next weekend we celebrate Stewardship Weekend. On this very special weekend, we reflect on all God’s blessings and make a decision as to what our gift will be in return for all that God has bestowed upon us. Please visit our Ministry Fair in the church basement to see how you can share your time and talent as a member of your parish community. Your active participation in our parish community is vital to the life of the Church. Free refreshments will be served!

STEWARDSHIP MINISTRY FAIR WEEKEND

Please join us in the parish hall following the weekend Masses as we embrace stewardship as a way of life in our parish. Take a few moments to see the various ministry opportunities that are available at Saint Alfred Parish. “If anyone would serve me,” Jesus says in the Gospel, “let him follow me; where I am, there will my servant be.” In what ways is Jesus inviting me to follow Him? What service is He asking of me?

On September ___ and ___, we celebrate stewardship weekend at Saint Alfred Parish. Tables and sign-up sheets for each ministry and committee will be in the parish center after all liturgies. There are many talented parishioners in our parish who would like to participate in the life of the parish. A representative from each ministry will be available to answer your questions. Please take the first step and join us after all liturgies next weekend. Pray about it and “Come to the Fair.”

APPENDIX D – Sample Postcards to Interested Parishioners

Option # 1

THANK YOU for joining with your Saint Alfred Family for Stewardship Weekend. Over _____ parishioners were present for the weekend celebration making it the most successful event in parish history.

Your presence during the weekend is a testament to the strong community you belong to at Saint Alfred. As you could see, Saint Alfred is bustling with activity. Our diligent volunteers have developed many outreach programs for the community as well as many parish-centered groups. The _____ Committee is pleased to welcome you and looks forward to seeing you at their next gathering. _____ will be calling you soon to inform you of the group's latest endeavors.

Watch the entrance to church for photos of this memorable weekend. Your support of parish life is truly appreciated. Thank you for all you do to make Saint Alfred Parish a home to so many.

Gratefully,

Rev. James Smith
Pastor

Option # 2

TIME AND TALENT FOLLOW-UP

Saint Alfred Parish

Phone (401) 555-5555
Fax (401) 555-5556



Thank you for volunteering your time and talent.

I understand you are interested in _____

- A meeting for this ministry has been planned on _____ at _____.
- Has not been scheduled to date. The ministry contact person is _____ Phone _____

Lord God, you alone are the source of every good gift, of the vast array of our universe, and the mystery of each human life. We praise you and we thank you for your great power and your tender, faithful love.

Everything we are and everything we have is your gift, and after having created us, you have given us into the keeping of your son, Jesus Christ.

Fill our minds with His truth and our hearts with His love, that in His spirit we may be bonded together in a community of faith, a parish family, a caring people.

In the name and spirit of Jesus, we commit ourselves to be good stewards of the gifts entrusted to us, to share in our time, our talent and our material gifts as an outward sign of the treasure we hold in Jesus.

Amen.

**If you would like more information about planning and organizing your Ministry Fair,
please call the Office of Stewardship & Development at 277-2121.**