

Good Morning! I am Sara Porter and I have been a member of the Cathedral for about 9 months. Although I have attended Mass here on and off for over 30 years. When I was asked to witness about Stewardship, I knew immediately that I could only do so if I spoke of how the stewardship of others here at the Cathedral has brought so much joy to my life.

I am a cradle Catholic. I received straight A's in all my religion classes. I knew it was better to give than receive, that they would know we were Christians by our love and gratitude was vital to my joy and my salvation. But for much of my adult life Church was an obligation. When I went at all, I would arrive late and leave early-what my brother in law described as a command performance.

I always identified as Catholic and loved my faith, but it was a selfish love. I wanted every sermon to inspire and every hymn to transport me. If I were bored, I tuned out. I had a strong desire to be closer to God, but I was passive. I did not want to do my part. For many years I was comfortable with this darkness. When I saw others serving the Church with their time and energy, I told myself, "They have nothing better to do with their free time."

All that began to change a year and a half ago when my husband stated he wanted to become Catholic and I agreed to be his sponsor. We chose the Cathedral for RCIA because the music, the sermons, the atmosphere appealed to us. I was worried. Would I be a good sponsor? We could not miss Mass, we would have to attend classes after Mass for almost 8 months. Oh, the time and spiritual commitment! Were we up for it?

Week after week beautiful, holy, thoughtful people came to our classes to share the Good News. They taught us about prayer, discipleship, the mass, the sacraments, our history and our faith. But they taught me so much more. Light was penetrating my darkness under this onslaught of all this charitable love. Very quickly I began to see Sunday mornings as the favorite part of my week.

I wanted more. I did small things like drop off some items for the Let's Dance Louisville auction. It was one of the three beautiful days we had last summer, and I went to deliver my items. In the room were hundreds and hundreds of auction items and 2 women working hard to organize and inventory. They would be joined by others and would be at it for days. I participated in one of the monthly book discussions. Here were fellow parishioners who were sacristans and members of hospitality and Parish Life Committee gathered in fellowship. I attended Let's Dance Louisville and saw so many of the RCIA sponsors hospitality committee members, lectors, choir members, lunch volunteers working so hard to make the evening successful, and they were joyful in their hard work. I am humbled by the generosity of so many people in this community.

I considered what I could do and decided, "I can read well. I'll become a lector." It has been a blessing and it opened my eyes to all the work involved with scheduling the volunteers for various activities-scheduling completed by volunteers! If you ever wonder if God has a sense of humor, wonder no more. I was approached to be on the Stewardship Committee. I'm an introvert, don't like committees and didn't have a clue about just what stewardship entailed. I have a sense of humor as well and agreed. To prepare for this new role, I researched Stewardship and found what the Catholic Counsel of Bishops had to say. I'll share just a brief passage. "Stewards of God's gifts are not passive beneficiaries. We

cooperate with God in our own redemption and in the redemption of others...This mission-proclaiming and teaching, serving and sanctifying is our task." I was going to need more than a sense of humor for this one.

I was daunted for just a minute and then I reflected on all I experienced here at the Cathedral. There were so many teachers participating in my own redemption, that this would be a task I could take on.

If you want to know more about stewardship opportunities, we are holding a stewardship fair next week after each mass. There are descriptions of our ministries on the website and in the January newsletter. Two ministries that have great need are Bereavement and Hospitality.

Time, talent and treasure, each of us have our own roles to play in stewardship. I have just begun this active phase of my faith journey. Thanks to all of you who lighted the way for me. I realize now I was right all along, there is nothing better to do with your free time than serve the Church.

Every Mass, Father says, "It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation always and everywhere to give you thanks, Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God." I stand before you, grateful and joyful for all the teaching you have provided me. Your light has penetrated my darkness and I am grateful too to be offered this opportunity to become more active in our faith community.