



STEWARDSHIP REFLECTION

My name is Bonnie Jones Patterson, and I have been a life-long member of St. James. My four siblings and I attended St. James Catholic School, and the older ones also attended E'town Catholic High School. I was blessed to have parents who were active in the parish when we were growing up and who modeled stewardship of both time and treasure. After I married and began raising our own family, we were fortunate to send our three children to St. James School. We now have a grandson, Avram, who just finished second grade there.

Family is very important to me. And St. James is my faith family. Just as in my personal family, each of us has abilities to share and ways to lend a hand to support the function of the family. I have found that

through serving our Lord together, we build relationships with one another and grow in our faith and sense of purpose. This is perhaps the greatest blessing about giving stewardship of your time--you become family instead of just a church member. Over the years, I have served as a minister of hospitality; as a host for weekly small group faith sharing; and as a member of the St. James School Board. I currently serve as a lector for the 12:00 Mass, which has been a true blessing for me for many years. I enjoy volunteering at our school and through the Grandparents Club when I am able to. I also have become involved in the Room in the Inn warming shelter ministry, which has been humbling and has strengthened my prayer life.

I was fortunate that I was taught the importance of tithing at a young age. I remember when I was a child getting my small envelope ready on Sunday mornings with my offering. After I married, it was hard as a young couple just starting out to give first to the Lord, instead of giving to Him what was left after paying the bills. Then my husband and I stepped out in faith and began giving first to God, and we found that we were never in need at the end of the month! We learned ways to be disciplined in our spending, and it enabled us to give joyfully. It has been a true blessing in our lives to give back to the Lord.

Whether you are new to St. James parish, or you have been here a while, it's a perfect time to become part of the family. You will be blessed beyond measure and grow closer to God when you serve Him with your time, talent and treasure alongside your brothers and sisters in Christ.