



# St. Joseph Parish

## Gathering in Faith, Discovering Community.

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November 19, 2014

Dear Parishioners:

With the Advent Season comes the four week preparation time for Christmas. It is a special prayer time in the Catholic Church because we are alerted to prepare for Christ's 2<sup>nd</sup> coming at the end of the world but also to prepare to remember Christ's 1<sup>st</sup> coming at Christmas.

During this special prayer time of Advent it is appropriate for us to embrace a renewed commitment to the Stewardship of Prayer as individuals and as a faith community at St. Joseph's.

Here are some prayer suggestions for Advent Season and beyond:

From the beginning of humanity we people have carried contradictions around in our souls. Contradictions involve our doing the opposite of our overall exterior and objective values. The 12 Fruits of the Holy Spirit are ways to reflect on our exterior and objective values:

### Fruit

Charity

Joy

Peace

Patience

Kindness

Goodness

Generosity

Gentleness

Faithfulness

Modesty

### Contradiction

Greed

Misery

Turmoil

Lose Temper

Hostility

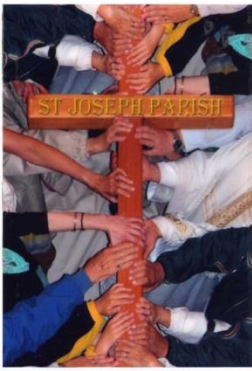
Hurtful

Stingy

Roughness

Double-Life

Show-Off



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Self-Control

Wild

Chastity

Indecent

The contradictions in our souls can control us at times; however, in the light of God's faithful love in Christ, the 12 fruits of the Holy Spirit with us make our lapses into our contradictions trivial by comparison.

Silent prayer with hope in the gaze of God can strengthen us to rise above our contradictions, not eliminate them, but see them as trivial compared to God's strength within us.

The above prayer approach can help us individually, but it is important to balance any individual prayer with a weekly commitment to public prayer at the Saturday or Sunday Eucharist (Mass).

Enclosed is a Stewardship of Prayer Commitment Sheet for you to fill out and keep in a viewable place in your home.

I pray that together we will grow in the Stewardship of Prayer this Advent Season, for a deepening prayer life will inevitably increase our generosity with our Stewardship of Time/Talent as well as our Stewardship of Treasure.

Since Christmas follows out of Advent, I take this opportunity to pray that you have a Blessed Christmas! It is a joy in Christ for me to be your pastor and to grow with you in the ways of Christ each week at Eucharist.

In Christ's Love,

Fr. Terry Steffens.

Reference: 1. THOUGHTS IN SOLITUDE by Thomas Merton  
2. Catechism of the Catholic Church



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## Stewardship of Prayer Commitment Sheet

I will reflect on my exterior and objective values in the light of the 12 fruits of the Holy Spirit \_\_\_\_\_ **(put your initials)**

I will attend Saturday or Sunday Eucharist (Mass) at St. Joseph's every week \_\_\_\_\_ **(put your initials)**