

**Tom and Marcia Scholler  
Lay Witness Presentation  
St. Daniel, Clarkston — January 24, 2010**

**(TOM)** Good morning. We are Tom and Marcia Scholler. We have been invited to share with you what stewardship means to us. We have been members of St. Daniel's for 12 years and have been members of parishes in Ann Arbor, Birmingham, and Grand Rapids, during, come June, 50 years of marriage. We have 5 children and 9 grandchildren.

The foundation of our lives together has been to know more of God in our everyday life through faithfully attending Mass and studying the Scriptures, and then trying to figure out how could we serve God by serving others.

**(MARCIA)** Tom and I come from different family lives. Tom had the good example of parents who were faithful parishioners, serving in many ministries as well as tithing generously. I was raised without knowing God since my family was too busy to be bothered with 'church'. Upon my conversion to Catholicism and marriage to Tom, a new way of living began for me for which I am eternally grateful. Through the years, I have discovered that God is real and that to know Him is to love Him: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Also, to know Him more makes a person want to be like Him and to think and to serve others.

**(TOM)** In trying through our years to know, love and serve God — those words are used in the very first paragraphs of the catechism — He has been so faithful to us, just as He promises in Scripture. We have enjoyed wonderful, peaceful, fulfilling lives. I am privileged to serve here as a lector, Eucharist minister and on parish committees. Marcia has enjoyed teaching religious education. We both are greeters at 7:30 Mass. It's very rewarding to see people smile when we say "Good morning" to them as they enter church, especially at that hour. I also participate in the St. Dan's men's golf league. So there are a variety of ways for people to be active in parish life at St. Dan's.

**(MARCIA)** I had to start slow in service and stewardship in religious education. I first began helping with the children's Sunday liturgy as they listened to God's Word at Mass, and then as a classroom aide, and finally I decided I could be a teacher. It is so gratifying to share God's Word with children.

We have learned in the course of our lives that the whole heart of stewardship is knowing, loving and serving God. It means to "let the Lord in our lives"; to invite God on our plans; discussing them with Him as a real person; because He is! St. James tells us, "Draw close to God and He will draw close to you." Psalm 91 encourages us, "Call upon me and I will answer." Recognize Jesus as our Best Friend. We can go to Mass and

receive Jesus in the Eucharist, but the key is to continue His presence in our daily lives the rest of the week in order to return something of ourselves to God.

**(TOM)** When we speak of stewardship we sometimes think it's just about money and giving to the offertory collection. Stewardship is much more than that; it's a way of life, a journey. But how we deal with money and property is an important aspect of stewardship. We have heard many times that in the Bible there are about 500 verses dealing with faith, and about 2,700 dealing with property and how to handle it. We all treasure money and what it can do for us — so does God!

**(Marcia)** He says in the book of Malachi: "Bring tithes into My storehouse, so there can be food in My house." The Church must have the provisions to minister to Christ's flock, plus God's Church must be able to reach out to help others. Jesus commissioned us to love others and help with their needs, and He told us that when we give to the poor, we give unto Him. St. Dan's, in addition to needing funds for church operations, has many ministries for the less fortunate, especially in these times, including the boxes in the entrance to church for food for Lighthouse. We can't out-give God! God wants our heart, and to be first place in our lives.

**(Tom)** Giving to God the first fruits of our labors means making God the first line item in the family budget. And not only the first item, but a fair proportion of what we spend on other things, like cable TV and pet food. The important point is to "Give God what is right, not what's left."

Here at St. Dan's, we speak of our efforts to be a "stewardship parish" through parishioners giving back to God our time, talent, and treasure. God has created each of us with unique talents for HIS special purpose and blesses each of us with material goods. God expects us to be stewards of those gifts and to use them for His honor and glory.

This is Stewardship Commitment weekend. Please get involved in our parish by filling out the Time & Talent form for something you enjoy (*hold up the form*). Even if you already volunteer for a ministry or service, please fill out the form; this is an annual commitment. And, if you don't see a ministry or activity you think St. Dan's should be doing, write it down; that's how our parish grows in stewardship.

And pray about your fair share offertory giving for the year as you fill out the Annual Treasure Renewal form (*hold up the form*). We commit to a home mortgage and car payments; why not commit to how much we give back to God?

Thank you and God bless your stewardship.