

December 5, 2003

Dear Pastors, Parish Directors and Stewardship Coordinators:

Although it is the Season of Christmas and each of you are working on the Advent liturgies, I am writing to you today about Lent, 2004. We have promised to get the Stewardship Packets to you in a timely manner, to allow your committees time to read, reflect and decide on the direction you want to take.

We have focused this Stewardship of Prayer Packet on **Family Prayer**. We are seeking to foster an increase in the opportunities for families to use this season of Lent as a means to gather around the table in prayer, be it the table of the Lord for Eucharist or the family dining table. We know that when prayer is supported in the family unit with growing children, there is an increased chance an active prayer life will be continued into adulthood.

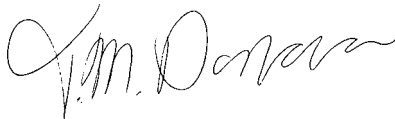
We have included information from the Diocese of Saginaw for those parishes wanting to purchase the **Little Books**. I didn't say "Little Black Books" as they are commonly known, as Bishop Untener has written Little White Books for Easter, Little Purple Books for Children's Lenten Prayer and Little Blue Books for Advent -Christmas. Information on ordering, volume pricing is enclosed.

One of the items enclosed is a taste of the past. We have included six weeks of **Prayer Tents** for Families to share. We have one for each week of Lent with bible passages from the weeks' readings, a reflection and an activity for the family. Prayer Tents had been previously used during Renew.

Other items included are a Prayer Resource written by Betty Dorn of New Holstein for the Gathering. She has graciously agreed to have it included and has offered to field any inquiries you have on getting started with new prayer groups.

Your Stewardship committees may want to invite families with strong Prayer Traditions to share and witness to this. Examples of preparing families for witness talks were included in our Sharing packet. Copies are available by contacting Pastoral Services.

In Christ's Peace,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "T.M. Donovan".

Thomas M. Donovan
Stewardship Consultant, Ext. 8286