

Stewardship Networking Group ***Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston***

**Join Us For Our November 14, 2024 MEETING, 10am;
at St Bernadette Church, Houston, Tx***

Best of ICSC / Plan 2025 topics/locations

Come and hear or share your ICSC experience from this year's conference in New Orleans. Bring your ideas, topics, speakers and other to help us plan for fruitful learning experiences in 2025. Also, if your parish would like to host a meeting* in 2025 please let us know.

RSVP to: coniperez@sbcglobal.net or starons@stbchurch.org

*** meeting at St Bernadette, 15500 El Camino Real Houston, TX 77062. Parish Life Center, the Tasker Room**

*** meetings held 2nd Thursday of every other month 10:00 am to 12 Noon at a host parish.**

Remembering Fr. Drew Wood, by, Sharon Ehrenkranz, Director of Parish Life, St Laurence Catholic Church

On September 25, 2024, we gathered to say goodbye to our beloved Fr. Drew.

Fr. Drew Wood first came to St. Laurence in 1998 and became our pastor in 2002. St. Laurence was his beloved bride. He loved us with abandon and we loved him right back. He knew the smell of his sheep and we, his flock, knew his voice. He met us where we were and he loved us into becoming something more.

Fr. Drew knew how to lead. As president of the student body (both at St. Thomas High School and University of St. Thomas), leadership and responsibility came naturally and he carried those strengths throughout his priestly career. Fr. Drew had a quick mind and was highly intelligent, but never spoke down to us. From the heart, he shared his vision, then listened, collaborated, delegated and trusted. A true servant-leader, he led with compassion, humility and integrity, always pointing us to the Father.

Fr. Drew knew how to inspire. He had a knack for noticing people's strengths and bringing out the best in us. He noticed everything. Even in a parish as large as St. Laurence, he recognized new faces and he remembered our names. He helped us appreciate who we were as a parish family and he inspired us to be a community of cheerful givers. From his love of Scripture, he chose a theme for the parish each year, and from his love of liturgy, he gave us beautiful Masses and the Heart of Worship.

Fr. Drew knew how to love. Fr. Drew loved Jesus, the Blessed Mother, the Roman Catholic Church and he loved his vocation as a diocesan priest. He loved participating in Mass and liturgical celebrations from around the world. He loved good music, full churches and a great AMEN. He loved our teens, little babies, schoolchildren, families and old people. He loved peach margaritas and the Acapulco Dinner at Los Tios and he loved touring Civil War battlefields. As a lover of all of these things and all of us, he was authentic, vulnerable, faithful, passionate and all-in.

In his final days, it was his love for us that made it so hard for him to let go of this world. Up to the end, he wanted nothing more than to return to the church to celebrate Mass with all of us.

Today, our hearts are heavy with the loss of our great pastor, but he would be the first to remind us, "We are an Easter people, St. Laurence! This is the day the Lord has made; let us be glad and rejoice in it!"

So, let us rejoice that we were known and loved, for so many years, by this great man and priest. Let us be grateful for being part of this large, vibrant and life-giving parish that he shepherded so well. And let us love one another and carry on the legacy of Fr. Drew, to be one people centered in the love of Christ, glorifying God in all we do.