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## **Are you leaving footprints?**

Steve Schons

Everyone leaves footprints on the sands of time. Our prints are made by the imprints of our lives on others. A person is remembered for the weight of his or her character, for marks of accomplishment, for shapes of kindness, for length of compassion, for values. When we leave positive impressions behind, we enhance the lives of our friends and families whom we love so much. We give them footprints to follow.

Thoughtful estate planning is one means we have to make our print in the sand. It helps others know and understand what we deemed important in our lives. For example, consider the impact of a plan that includes provisions for family members, your parish or diocese, and other worthy charitable organizations.

**An estate gift makes a positive statement.** When you include your local parish or the diocese in your final estate plans, you declare to your family and friends that you believe in and care about these things. Your parting gift becomes a clear declaration of your values.

**An estate gift provides needed funding.** Estate gifts are especially valuable, not only because they tend to be larger than annual gifts, but they often come at critical times. Estate gifts can be designated for a specific purpose or they can be unrestricted for use where they are needed most. For example, someone could make an estate gift specifically to their local Catholic cemetery.

**An estate gift encourages imitation.** There's something about a well-planned estate gift that influences and encourages others to do the same. As friends and family members plan their own estates, they may recall your generosity and thoughtfulness. Your gift may unlock resources for other worthy causes as well.

*"Remember that when you leave this earth, you can take with you nothing that you have received - only what you have given: a full heart enriched by honest service, love, sacrifice and courage." - St. Francis of Assisi*

*Steve Schons recently joined the Diocese of Fargo as director of Stewardship and Development.*

### **Steve Schons brief bio**

- Born and raised in Moorhead
- Graduate '87 of Shanley High School, Fargo
- Graduate '92 of University of Mary, Bismarck
- Management and sales background
- Most recently worked in the non-profit sector, most of which was in major and planned giving
- Knights of Columbus member
- Sts. Anne and Joachim Parish member
- Children: Marissa, 15, Nicholas, 12