

ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM 2011

Scriptures and Stewardship

First Fruits

The Holy Scriptures speak of offering back to God the "first fruits" of our possessions, thus recognizing Him as the provider of all we are and all we have. Stewardship is making Christ the first priority in the use of the time, talents and treasures He has given to us.

Return to God His Own Gifts

King David said, "all things come from Thee, and of Thine own we have given to Thee." (Chronicles 29:14) Our money and possessions are not ours, but on loan from God. When we give to the Church, we return to God, the Owner, His rightful portion.

Proportionate Giving

The more we are given, the more is expected of us. "Everyone to whom much is given, from him will much be required." (Luke 12:48) Each Steward should determine what percentage of his or her in-come will be committed to Christ and the Church for the year.

Cheerful Giving

"Each person should give what he had decided in this heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful (willing) giver." (2 Corinthians 9:7)

How do you compare your expenditure on personal entertainment – movies, music, television, games, and restaurants – to your giving for God's work? Our stewardship giving should resonate the words; "We Worship, Praise and Bless Thee."

Your support enables our ministry

Money is a necessary tool for ministry. To fulfill the Church's mission, we are called upon to commit our fair share for the financial support of our Church's expenses on a parish and diocesan level.

Through Stewardship, let your particular Church become a reflection on earth of the glory of heaven. St. John Chrysostom (4th Century)

He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. (2 Corinthians 9:6)

Being an active Orthodox Christian Steward is to believe in our Church and wanting to support and perpetuate her mission. It is one way that views the support of our Church as a matter of personal commitment and conscience. The financial support that we pledge for the year will be utilized to help meet our parish's total financial obligations for its programs and ministries.

Ministry Resources

The quality of our service as a parish, as an Orthodox Church community, depends directly on the level of your generous giving.

We shouldn't have to depend on special affairs to meet our budget, for this is our direct responsibility. Stewardship places the responsibility on all of us, for we are the recipients of God's gifts and play an active role in perpetuating His work of salvation.

Private and Confidential

Your Stewardship Commitment is kept in confidence. Jesus taught us that giving should be done quietly, generously and out of sight of others. If you wish to revise your commitment during the year for any reason, you may send a note to the Parish Priest indicating your intention. Your pledge will be seen only by the Parish Priest, Board President and Treasurer and Parish Treasurer.

For our Church...

In making and meeting our Stewardship Commitment, we are not paying for something; we are offering our commitment to the work of Jesus Christ and to his Church, which He has established for us. Our giving is an expression of our love for Christ who gave His life for our salvation and well-being. We give a portion of our resources to continue the work of Christ in the world so that others may be blessed as we have been blessed.

Weekly Stewardship Giving

You may remit your commitment in the manner that suits you best. Since small regular contributions are easier to manage, it is suggested that your contribution be made on a weekly basis, using the convenient weekly stewardship envelopes. Simply divide your yearly pledge by 52 or your monthly pledge by 4.33 to determine your weekly contribution.

We Owe Everything to God

When you are generous, you are not bestowing a gift, but repaying a debt. Everything you possess materially comes from God, who created all things. And every spiritual and moral virtue you possess is through divine grace. Thus you owe every-thing to God. More than that, God has given you his Son, to show you how to live: how to use your material possessions, and how to grow in moral and spiritual virtue. We may say that your material and spiritual possession cost God nothing; God created the universe in order to express his own glory. But the gift of his Son was supremely costly, because his Son suffered and died for our sakes. The agony of Christ on the Cross is the measure of how much God loves us. For this reason we should take none of our gifts, material or spiritual, for granted; day-by-day we should give thanks to God for what he has bestowed on us. Once this spirit of gratitude infuses us, we shall see generosity for what it is. We will regard our act as no more than a small token of appreciation for all that we have received or, more precisely, the repayment of a tiny fraction of God's blessings.

St. John Chrysostom