

# COMMON QUESTIONS...DIRECT ANSWERS

## *What are the characteristics of giving according to Stewardship principles?*

Christian Stewardship means these things about giving:

1. **Voluntary**-We give from the heart, not from compulsion.
2. **Sacrificial**-We give “off the top” of our earnings, not from what’s left over after satisfying our worldly wants.
3. **Proportionate**-We give a percentage of our income; more if blessed with more. It is returning to God a portion of what is His in recognition that all comes from Him. It’s not like paying dues to a club. Stewardship means recognizing that giving to the Church is an essential aspect of our relationship with God. It places the responsibility of Parish support where it belongs: in the hands of each parishioner. It recognizes that support of your parish is a matter of personal commitment and conscience.

## *How does our parish Stewardship Program work?*

It is simple. Every “pledging unit” should prayerfully consider and complete a Membership form and return it to the Church office or bring it to Church and drop it off at the Candle Stand.

A pledging unit is either:

1. *A Family* (husband, wife, children under 18 and children attending college or not self-supporting.)
2. *A single Adult*: retired, working, widowed or over 18 with employment.

## *When I pledge to give a certain portion of my income, do I still have to pay my Archdiocese Assessment separately?*

The Archdiocese has decided to have parishes give 10% of their gross income to cover the Archdiocese Budget. Therefore, we will give that amount to the Archdiocese except for monies given to our Building Fund, which is exempt. Therefore, we must pledge with that in mind. Each pledging household is encouraged to give an additional 10% of their total pledge commitment to offset the Archdiocesan parish pledge. (I.e., if your annual pledge is \$6,000 – add \$600 to that amount so that your entire parish pledge remains local, in the parish.)

## *How much should I give?*

The real answer to that question is that it is between you and God; however, to be faithful you should ask yourself some questions. Do I really give of my time for God’s work? Am I really using my talents for the kingdom of God? Do I give significantly of my income to the Church? If you are a faithful steward, your giving should reflect the blessings God has given you. The amount should be *proportionate* to your God-given abilities and current income. It should also be *Sacrificial* that is, not a token amount. God should not be viewed as a waiter who receives a few dollars after we have fully satisfied our own needs. The amount of time, talent and money we give should reflect our Personal Commitment and Conscience, and the fact that the Church is a Priority in Our Life, not just an afterthought.

The biblical standard for giving is a “tithe”; that is, 10% off the top of income received. In return, God promises to bless those who are faithful in tithing: “Bring the full tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house; and thereby put me to the test, says the Lord of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you “an overflowing blessing” (Malachi 3: 10). For Christians, this is not a matter of law, but a standard to which we all aspire. It is the only measure of giving consistently advocated in Scripture. If we are not giving a full “tithe”, we ought to be moving in that direction.

## **Why all this emphasis on proportionate and percentage giving?**

Because the emphasis in Christian Stewardship is on *Equal sacrifice, Not Equal Giving*; we give according to our means. If we all had the same blessings of talents and income then we could think in terms of “one size fits all” when giving. But this is not the case. Some can do more than others, and they should. God calls each of us to lovingly return to Him a meaningful portion of what He has entrusted to us.

## *How should I pay my Stewardship Pledge?*

You can pay your Stewardship Pledge in whatever way is most convenient for you. As the Stewardship Form indicates, this can be weekly, monthly, quarterly, semi-annually or annually. We even have some members that give stocks & bonds.

## *What if I make a pledge and am not able to fulfill it?*

Your Stewardship Pledge commitment is not a legal obligation, but a promise to God. If your financial situation changes and you can’t keep your pledge, just contact the Church office. The matter will be kept strictly confidential and you will retain all the privileges of parish membership.