



Stewardship of Giving 2010

A Message from Father Pat...

Stewardship of Giving ~ Week Two (February 28, 2010)

What is Stewardship?

- Stewardship is not a new idea; its roots are in Christianity.
- Stewardship does not begin with the needs of the parish; it is the need of the *giver* to give.
- Stewardship is not fund-raising...it is an invitation to change our hearts...it is a way of life.
- Stewardship is a call from God.
- Stewardship is the management of the gifts of time, talent, and treasure that God has given us.
- Stewardship is the challenge of supporting the works of our faith community.
- Stewardship is an opportunity, not a burden.
- Stewardship is a faith decision to return to God, out of gratitude, a first portion of the treasures with which he entrusts us as His stewards.

Why Does St. Thomas More Ask for an Annual Financial Pledge? Our *Stewardship of Giving* campaign is part of the three-phase stewardship process in our parish. By focusing on prayer, giving, and ministry in separate campaigns, we are reminded that Christian stewardship is not a burden to be endured once a year, but a way of life to be embraced all year through. Each Lent, we ask our parishioners to consider prayerfully their financial support to our parish and make a commitment by completing a pledge card...a commitment to God in thanksgiving for what He has done for us.

How Much Should I Give? Our financial circumstances may change from year to year; that is why we need discern prayerfully this important matter. Certainly our financial stewardship must be proportioned and sacrificial. For some Catholics, the Biblical tithe (10% of income) is a part of their stewardship, while some give 5% to parish and another 5% to charities. Depending on your current financial standing and family concerns, a tithe might be the right faith decision for you. In prayer, you might ask the Lord, "*How much should I give to the church this year? Have I changed my pledge in the last several years?*" Pray to be enabled to give generously.

An Offering or a Tip? Our giving must be sacrificial; that is, it should have a 'bite' to it. God should come first...is our pledge an offering from the first fruits, or just a tip left at the table? If we examine the gifts the Lord has placed in our hands and spend time in prayer, then we will make the right decision in our financial stewardship this year.

"Honor the Lord with your wealth, with first fruits of all your produce; Then will your barns be filled with grain, with new wine your vats will overflow."

~ Proverbs 3:9-10