



YOUR DIOCESE

Alive in Christ

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE DIOCESE OF EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA • SUMMER



GREAT LENT
HOLY WEEK
PASCHA
PENTECOST

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COMMUNICATIONS BRIEF

Glory to Jesus Christ!

This issue of Alive in Christ encompasses the Great Feast just concluded. Much of the Diocese is represented. If your parish is not, please consider becoming an active participant. The communications department is willing to assist you in getting started; all it takes is a phone call or email.

This issue also sees a continuation of topics related to revitalization. This time, we welcome guest writer Richard Reidy giving us his thoughts on Orthodox Stewardship. Please note that this article was taken from a keynote address delivered by Mr. Reidy, then Treasurer of the Orthodox Church in America, at the July 9-11 1981 Assembly of the Pacific Southwest Deanery in St. Luis Obispo, California. 1981! The numbers given at the end of the article date from 2003, which is also 10 years out of date. Hopefully you and your parish can get a clear picture of how to make Stewardship work.



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To the Parishioners and faithful of the Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania.

Christ is Our Midst!

For us who live in the northern hemisphere, the season of Pentecost coincides with the seasons of the year during which we cultivate, grow and harvest the 'fruits of the earth'. It is the time of year which we are given to meditate upon our personal growth -- the period when we move forward or backwards, when we grow to the fullness of the stature of Christ in the Holy Spirit, or give ourselves over to decay and death. It has to be one or the other, because in this world there is no standing still. Everything is process. Either we grow into the fullness of life: mental, spiritual or Physical -- or "all of the above" , or we decay into death. At all times and in every place we are proceeding, one way or another two one of these goals.

It is the position of Orthodox Christianity that human beings, while they were, along with the rest of creation, created by God, had a special relationship both with the rest of creation and with God. In the words of the Fathers, humanity is both microcosm and mediator: microcosm because all of the rest of creation is summed up in humanity, and mediator because each person is a mixed creation of soul and body who has the possibilities of direct communion with the creator. Humanity was not created perfect in the abstract sense of being perfectly completed with all things accomplished in them, rather we were created in the image of God with the potential of fulfilling His likeness. Because we are born into a world of change, our perfection is of the moment: the perfection of potential, which so long as it remains on the right path, remains perfect.

It is our business, as Orthodox Christians, to grow in the state of communion with God through Jesus Christ and in the Holy Spirit. We are meant to advance, in the words of St. Paul, "from Glory to Glory". This is both the path and the goal of the Spiritual Life. In this season, the season of the Holy Spirit, in which -- after we have meditated in our liturgical life upon the birth, life, death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ -- it is our task to live and grow in such a manner that we will, in the words of St. Peter, partake of the Divine Nature. It is our purpose, as Orthodox Christians, to become by the Grace of God what Jesus Christ is by nature.

Libraries are filled with books which give details about the ways to accomplish this in our Church life, our ascetic life, and our moral struggles. However, there was a man, an elder or staretz, named Fr. Porphyrios, whose life spanned most of the twentieth century, and who, through his own ascetic struggles, was illumined with the grace of the Holy Spirit such that he was granted the grace of "clear sight" (i.e. he could see people and events at a great distance away, as well as facts about people's lives which were not always apparent) who gives one of best summaries of this effort. He said to his Spiritual children: "Fast as much as you can, make as many prostrations as you can, attend as many vigils as you like, but be joyful. Have Christ's joy. It is the joy that lasts forever, that brings eternal happiness. It is the joy of our Lord that gives assured serenity, serene delight and full happiness. All joyful joy that surpasses every joy. Christ desires and delights in scattering joy, in enriching his faithful with joy. I pray that your joy may be full. This is what our religion is, This is the direction we must take. Christ is Paradise, my children. What is Paradise? It is Christ. Paradise begins here and now. It is exactly the same: those who experience Christ here on earth, experience Paradise. That's the way it is, just as I tell you."¹

So it is, that we wish you growth and joy in the Lord during this season of the Holy Spirit, during which we are given the task to grow and mature in the life of Christ in the Holy Spirit.

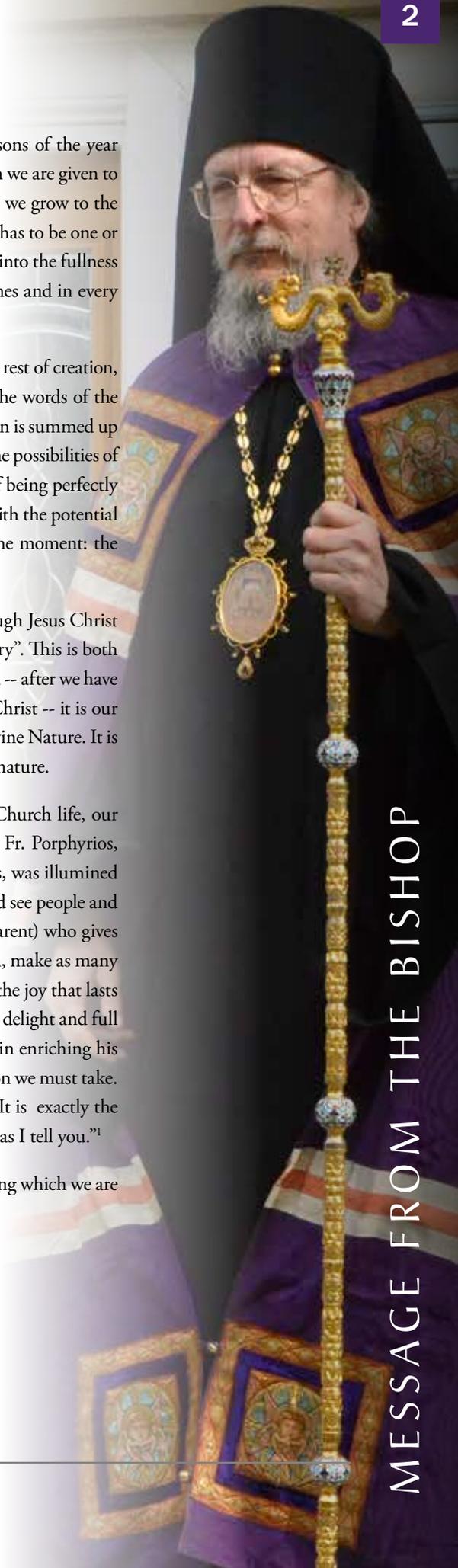
In Christ

+ *Melchisedek*

+Melchisedek

Bishop of Pittsburgh and Western Pennsylvania
locum tenens of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania

1. Elder Porphyrios: "Wounded by Love: Life and Wisdom of Elder Porphyrios" p. 96



MESSAGE FROM THE BISHOP



Episcopal Search Committee Meets in Harrisburg

On Tuesday, April 23rd, 2013 the Episcopal Search Committee had the first preliminary meeting, held at the Agia Sophia Coffee House in Harrisburg Pa. The Chairperson of the Committee is the Very Rev. John Kowalczyk, Chancellor of the Diocese of Eastern Pa. The purpose of the Episcopal Search Committee is to help facilitate the vacant see of the Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania and report its findings to His Grace, Bishop Melchisedek, the locum tenens of the Diocese. The following members participated; Fr. James Weremedic, Dean of the Philadelphia Deanery and Ellen Gundersen. Fr. Jason Franchak was the appointed secretary. Fr. Nicholas Solak, Dean of the Wilkes-Barre Deanery and Arthur Karakos. The Very Rev. Michael Hatrak, Dean of the Frackville Deanery, the Rev. Stephen Vernak, host pastor, and Mark Linnehan. The Rev. Martin Browne, Treasurer of the Diocese.



The Diocesan Council met at St. Michael the Archangel Orthodox Church in Wilmington, DE on Monday, May 13, 2013. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for August 12, 2013, at Holy Apostle's Mission in Mechanicsburg.

SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY

IN THE DIOCESE OF EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA



HARRISBURG - the Frackville Deanery welcomed His Eminence, Metropolitan SAVAS of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis, to Christ the Saviour Orthodox Church to celebrate the Sunday of Orthodoxy



PHILADELPHIA - the Philadelphia Deanery welcomed His Grace, Bishop MARK to St. Nicholas Orthodox Church to celebrate the Sunday of Orthodoxy



WILKES-BARRE - The Wilkes-Barre Deanery welcomed His Grace, Bishop MELCHISEDEK to Holy Resurrection Cathedral to celebrate the Sunday of Orthodoxy.

GREAT LENT

MISSION SERVICES AND PARISH ACTIVITIES DURING GREAT LENT



HARRISBURG - Christ the Saviour Orthodox Church welcomed the St. Tikhon Seminary Mission Choir on their annual visit.



WILMINGTON - St. Michael's Orthodox Church held a Lenten Retreat, hosting Mother Christophora and Mother Barbara from Holy Transfiguration Monastery.

AROUND THE DIOCESE



POTTSTOWN - The Philadelphia Deanery welcomed His Grace, Bishop MARK, to the St. John of the Ladder Mission Service at Holy Trinity Orthodox Church.



WILKES-BARRE - The Wilkes-Barre Deanery welcomed His Grace, Bishop MARK, to Holy Trinity Orthodox Church for The Veneration of the Holy Cross Mission Service.



NANTICOKE - The Wilkes-Bare Deanery welcomed His Grace, Bishop MARK, to St. John the Baptist Orthodox Church for the Feast of St. Gregory of Palamas Mission Service.



HARRISBURG - His Grace, Bishop MARK visits Christ the Saviour Orthodox Church for Presanctified Liturgy, At the Liturgy he bestowed the kamilavka on Fr. Stephen.



OLYPHANT - His Grace, Bishop MARK made a hierarchical visit to St. Nicholas Orthodox Church where he presided during Divine Liturgy.



WILKES-BARRE - His Grace, Bishop MARK, visits Holy Trinity Orthodox Church for Presanctified Liturgy.

CHRIST IS RISEN!

HOLY WEEK, GOOD FRIDAY, PASCHA AND BEYOND



JERMYN - Blessing of the palms and willows at St. Michael's Orthodox Church.



HARRISBURG - Holy Wednesday Services at Christ the Saviour Orthodox Church.



STROUDSBURG - Good Friday services at Holy Trinity Orthodox Church.



WILLIAMSPORT - Good Friday services at Elevation of the Holy Cross Orthodox Church.

AROUND THE DIOCESE



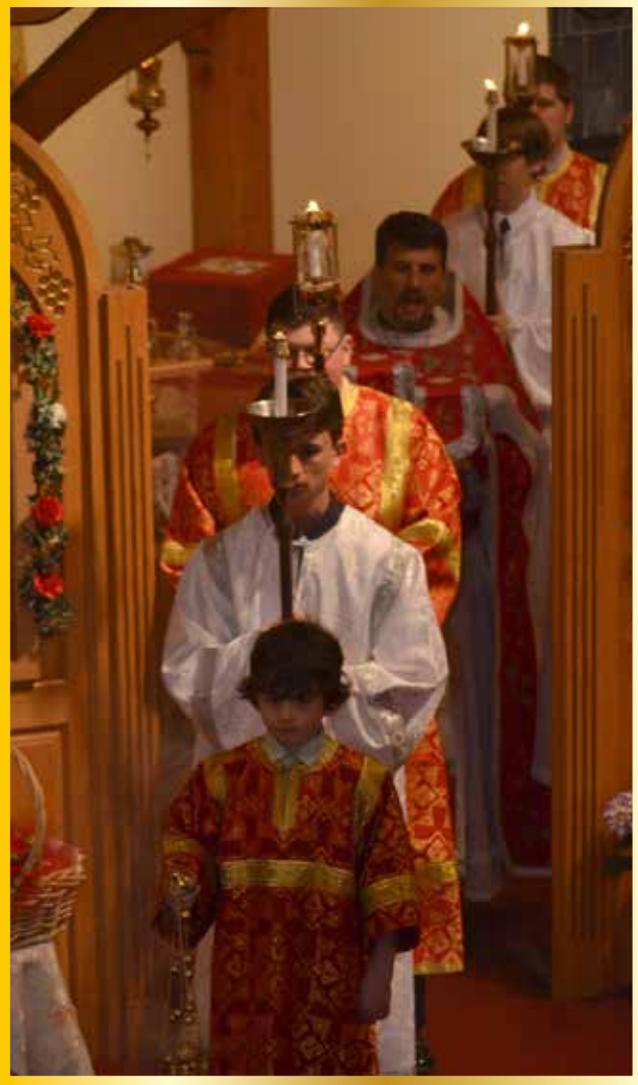
OLYPHANT - The Good Friday Procession at St. Nicholas Orthodox Church.



JERMYN - Lazarus Saturday at St. Michael's Orthodox Church. The Church School Children receive the Holy Mysteries and enjoy a Lenten Breakfast afterwards.



MECHANICSBURG - CHRIST IS RISEN! The Easter procession at Holy Apostle's Mission.



STROUDSBURG - CHRIST IS RISEN! The Easter procession begins at Holy Trinity Orthodox Church.



WILMINGTON - CHRIST IS RISEN! Pascha services at St. Michael the Archangel Orthodox Church.



WRIGHTSTOWN - CHRIST IS RISEN! The Easter procession at St. Mark's Orthodox Church.



HARRISBURG - CHRIST IS RISEN! The Easter Procession at Christ the Saviour Orthodox Church



WILLIAMSPORT - CHRIST IS RISEN! Almost made it! A Parishioner at Elevation of the Holy Cross Orthodox Church near the end of midnight services, attended by His Grace, Bishop MARK.



JERMYN - CHRIST IS RISEN! St. Michael's Orthodox Church parish receiving the Holy Mysteries at Divine Liturgy on Easter Sunday.



HARRISBURG - Bright Week - The celebration of the Lord's Resurrection continues at Christ the Saviour Orthodox Church.

PENTECOST



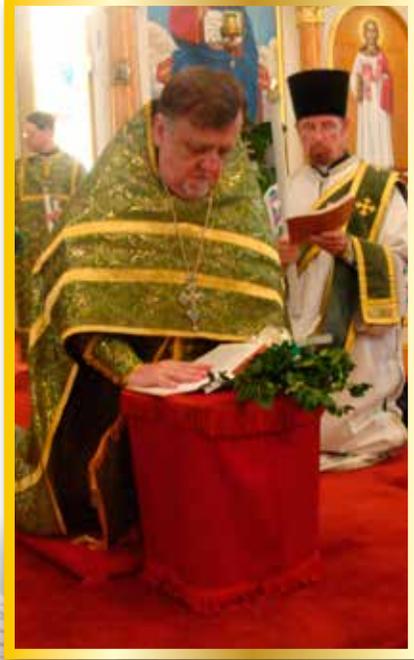
WILKES-BARRE - Fr. David Shewczyk serves Divine Liturgy at Holy Trinity.



HARRISBURG - The faithful awaiting the precious Gifts during Divine Liturgy.



WILLIAMSPORT- Fr. Dan Kovalek prepares to serve Communion at Elevation of the Holy Cross.



JERMYN - Fr. John Kowlaczyk reads the Pentecost Prayers at St. Michael's.



EDWARDSVILLE - Fr. Paul Schellbach celebrates Pentecost at St. John's



STROUDSBURG - Fr. Nick Solak blesses the faithful at Holy Trinity during the Pentecost service.

AROUND THE DIOCESE

PARISH NEWS



WILLIAMSPORT - Holy Cross Church Parish Council members and others participated in a Parish Revitalization Conference; utilizing the Parish Health Inventory Model adopted by the Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania.



JERMYN - Honoring those that gave their lives in World War II and Korea at St. Michael's Orthodox Church.



JERMYN - His Grace, Bishop MARK made a Hierarchical visit to St. Michael's Orthodox Church to celebrate Mother's Day with the faithful.



WILMINGTON - Blessing the new Holy Gospel at St. Michael the Archangel Orthodox Church.



WILLIAMSPORT - Mary Meredith Gee was baptized into Christ on May 26, 2013. Daria Armstrong is her sacramental sponsor. May God grant His newly-enlisted warrior "Many Years!"



MECHANICSBURG - The faithful of Holy Apostle's Mission gather to bless the graves and serve Panakhida for the Alaskan Orthodox Indian Children who died at the Carlisle Indian School in Carlisle, PA. Memory Eternal!



HARRISBURG - On Saturday, May 18th the community of Christ the Saviour celebrated its 50th Anniversary. His Grace Bishop Mark led the Diocesan and local Pan-Orthodox clergy, and the many faithful who gathered for the celebration of the Divine Liturgy. Also in attendance was Metropolitan Herman, retired primate and former archbishop of the Diocese of Eastern PA (1981-2002). At the Liturgy Peter (Scott) Staller was tonsured a reader.



WILMINGTON - St. Michael the Archangel Orthodox Church bless the parish's new church sign on Palm Sunday.



WILLIAMSPORT - Parishioners (and priest!) continue work on re-staining the exterior of The Elevation of the Holy Cross Orthodox Church.

With the blessing of His Grace, Bishop MELCHISEDEK, locum tenens of Eastern Pennsylvania, and His Grace, Bishop MARK, Administrator, Holy Apostles Mission in Mechanicsburg officially purchased 14 acres of land. After an almost two year process, through many meetings, tests, and plan revisions, on Friday, March 15, Fr. Timothy Hojnicky, Rector, signed the papers for the purchase.

On Tuesday, April 30th, His Grace, Bishop MARK, visited the future home of the Holy Apostles community





Stewardship

By Richard Reidy

For many of us, the need of raising money in the Church is viewed much as the Victorians viewed sex. It is necessary but not nice. Clergy and lay people alike see the fund-raising task in the parish church as an unwelcome interruption in the ongoing spiritual life of the parish.

For some of us the issue of parish finances is often treated a little like a commercial message in the middle of a good television program. It is separated from the program itself in sound and content, with no connection with what went before and what will come after. Discussion is kept as short as possible so we can, as quickly as possible, get on with the real spiritual thing we are here to do.

Or, the topic is wrapped in such a series of religious clichés and spiritual-sounding pieties as to go almost unnoticed. The feeling persists that many of our people are still theologically and spiritually hung-up when the issue of finances comes around.

If the topic makes us uncomfortable, and it usually does because of our conditioning, it is because we are not aware of the recorded approach of Jesus to the subject of man's relationship to his money. Many people are surprised to discover that Jesus understood the deep and compelling potential for good or evil that exists in the relationship of a person to his money. Many people believe Jesus talked only about peace and forgiveness and prayer and sacrifice and the kingdom of God. This is not true. As recorded in the New Testament, Jesus talked a great deal about the relationship of a person and his material possessions. One sixth of all the words of Jesus are concerned with this one subject. One third of all Jesus' parables are devoted to it. Money, and what it represents to us, has been a major preoccupation of every generation, and I submit that the church should not treat discussions about money as if money were a bad 'four-letter' word. On the contrary, relationships with regard to money should have the same high priority in every Church's program of education that Jesus places on it. All year round, for all age groups, starting with the priest at the Amvon, we should be made mindful of the relationship of a person to his material possessions.

Fund Raising vs Christian Stewardship

At the outset, I want to establish different definitions for fund raising and for Christian stewardship. Fund raising means getting people to give more money. Christian stewardship on the other hand helps people to be more giving. Christian stewardship could be defined as the effective commitment or investment of human and material resources in participation with Christ in his love for others.

There are two primary points to be made. The first point is that stewardship always has to do with a Christian's task of giving away gifts that have already been given to him by God. This presupposes, of course, acceptance of the belief that all things are conferred on us by God. The second point is that stewardship always has to do with a Christian getting free of what binds him. In our culture, nothing binds us more than money - the symbol of material things. The first point has to do with turning to a new life; the latter with turning away from an old life. In other words, stewardship is intertwined with conversion. One has to be turned away from what binds him, and turned towards what frees him. This is the test of genuine conversion.

We must become deeply convinced that the relationship of a person and his money is fundamentally a spiritual matter, as fraught with implications for an individual's spiritual life as is his life of prayer or any other "religious" activity. Jesus said in Matthew 6:21, "Where your treasure is there shall your heart be also." Somehow, in some way, what a person does with his money, how he thinks about it, where he spends it, what he will do to earn it, and the things to which he will give it are some of the real clues to who he is inside, to what is essentially important to him, to what is really in his heart. It is significant to note the order of things in the words of Jesus. He does not say, "Where your heart is there shall your treasure be also." Try an experiment. Go out and buy a few shares of stock. Make it enough so the financial interest is important to you. Then notice what part of the newspaper you turn to first when you pick it up. I'd be willing to bet it will be to the financial page to check on your investment. Interest and enthusiasm follow money. "Where your treasure is there shall your heart be also."

To put it another way, the places where we make our most serious financial investments are the places where our real self, our inner self, is going to be most interested, most teachable, most responsive, and most open. To deal with a person in terms of what he does with his money is to deal with most people where they really live. A properly conceived stewardship effort in the Church can thus be an avenue to genuine spiritual growth. Good stewardship has that potential. That, I believe, is something of what Jesus meant when he said, "Where your treasure is there shall your heart be also." It is, therefore, extremely important that we begin to recover a soundly Orthodox theological base for our stewardship efforts.

Theology of Money

We are all aware that the basic questions of life will, ultimately, be satisfied only by theological answers. This includes questions about money and our use of it.

A sound theology of money has the potential to tap the spiritual roots of Christians at a point where they are the most teachable, because it is here where they are the most concerned. A well-conceived, theologically sound stewardship program can be the most exciting spiritual adventure you can undertake in parish life.

And, yet, how badly some of us sometimes handle the task of promoting the issue of financial support for our parishes. There are as many different approaches as there are parishes. There are three common approaches that are guaranteed in failure and misunderstanding

The Numbers Approach

One is the Numbers Approach. A parish sits down and calculates what it will need next year to carry out the Church's work in that parish. For example, let's suppose in a given parish a 10 percent increase will be needed next year. The message is communicated that if everyone would just raise their contribution for next year by 10 percent, we will make it fine. There are several things wrong with this approach.

First, it puts the emphasis in the wrong place. The Numbers Approach will always put the emphasis on the dollars the Church needs rather than on the giving. When you start with a budget, the center of attention remains on the numbers, on the balance sheet. You can talk all you like about giving as responsible Christians, but few will hear what you say because the natural tendency will be to sharpen their mental pencils to go over the Church's budget.

Second, the Numbers Approach is unfair. The basis of the message is that everyone is giving evenly, that family A and family B are already giving conscientiously in relation to their means. But the facts belie the assumption. While some families do give conscientiously, many more give far less than they could, or should. To ask for a percentage increase puts an unfair burden on those who are doing their best to be faithful in their giving, and it allows the token giver to remain exactly where he is. Even if he responds to the percentage increase, he will remain what he has been, a token giver.

Third, this approach represents a minimum rather than a maximum request. Perhaps it is the fear of asking too much and facing failure that tempts us. But with the Numbers Approach, what we ask as an increase is pretty well educated by what we are fairly certain is attainable. Consequently, it doesn't challenge anyone spiritually. We ask our people to give to the Church, or to a given parish, and the effect is to base our appeal on the people's responsibility for the survival of the parish, on parish loyalties, on interest in parish activities, or even on loyalty to a particular parish priest. To base our appeal on these things is to preclude any serious consideration of giving as a matter of a person's spiritual life, as a serious matter between a Christian and God.

Church people operate on at least three levels of loyalty. We live on the level of denominational loyalty, that is loyalty to the Orthodox Church. In addition to that, we live on the level of parish loyalty. We have an interest in seeing our parish survive, prosper, and grow. Beyond these loyalties, we also live on the level of a loyalty - a commitment - to God in Jesus Christ. At our best, all three loyalties complement and reinforce each other. However, all too often, the first two loyalties are used as a substitute for the third. We can so easily be caught up in a kind of "Churchianity." Indeed, to be faithful to a parish is a far easier commitment than to be faithful to Christ. And when we deal with our stewardship task on the level of parish commitments, we run the real risk of allowing these to be a substitute for any challenge to grow in relationship and commitment to God. While we may say that our stewardship is a matter of the spirit, when the push really comes, it's the other loyalties on which we are really banking. That's the real message church members will hear.

The "Shame-On-You" Approach

The "Shame-On-You" approach is the second of the three ineffective avenues to church funding. The message comes across something like this: as a nation we spend

\$3 billion on cosmetics

\$3 billion on tobacco

\$10 billion on entertainment

\$12 billion on alcohol

\$1.5 billion on churches and charities

The climax of all this is the question, "Aren't you ashamed of yourself?"

Obviously, the great appeal of such an approach is that it is all too true. The priorities of most Americans are not what they should be, but there are some liabilities in this approach.

First, it appeals to guilt. If we feed people's sense of guilt, what spiritual growth can there be? We may shake a few billfolds a little harder, but we also run the real risk of driving people away.

Secondly, criticism for failure seldom stimulates people to do their best. Giving, be it to the Church or to any worthy cause, is not an intellectual process but an emotional process. Most giving is done because a person has been motivated by his feelings. To accuse people of not giving what they ought to give, puts them on the defensive rather than motivating them to give more. Child psychology has long ago recognized that behavior in a child is modified by approval and acceptance, far more readily than by criticism. In the stewardship task we need to learn that same lesson

The “Cry Poor” Approach

The third tactic we’ll call the “Cry Poor” approach. The message comes out like this: “Friends, we are living in difficult times. Our parish is in grave danger.” And then is listed all the desperate needs of the parish which might include leaks in the roof, cracks in the parking lot surface, the need for secretarial help, janitorial help, a whole new Sunday School curriculum, etc. It all adds up to a message that says, “Poor old St. -. Won’t you all please dig a little deeper to help her out in this time of crisis?” The theory, of course, is that very few people can resist such a plea from their own parish, but this approach seems to have some severe liabilities.

It appeals to failure instead of effective success. If there is a single principle in modern advertising that runs through almost every ad, it is the principle that success begets success; failure begets failure. People want to be associated with successful things. To cry poor in the world of business is the kiss of death. In the Church it may work once, but in the long run, this approach will lose you money, members, and enthusiasm.

The “Cry Poor” approach tries to motivate giving out of pity instead of thanksgiving. The parish church, despite all the problems of parish life, will nonetheless never become effective and alive out of a sense of pity. Indeed, pity for the church is an unworthy motive to sustain any effective stewardship, or anything else for that matter.

Is There An Alternative?

Experience shows that there is a way that is more theologically sound and much more spiritually challenging than the approaches I just described. At this point we must go back into Scripture for our background. The book of Genesis begins with the words:

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

The theme of God’s ownership is a recurring theme in both the Old and the New Testaments. The writer of Deuteronomy, after listing many of the accomplishments of man’s hand - his house, the building of his herds and flocks, and his accumulation of money - then warns:

Beware lest you say in your heart, “My power and the might of my hand has given me this wealth.”

You shall remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth.

God is the source and man is the recipient of God’s gifts. In 1 Chronicles 29:14-16 King David prays,

But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able thus to offer willingly? For all things come from thee, and of thy own have we given thee. . . Lord our God, all this abundance that we have provided for building thee a house for thy holy name comes from thy hand and is all thy own.

The same theme is caught by the prophet Malachi. Malachi chastises the people for withholding their offerings to God. He asks, “Will man rob God? Yet you are robbing me. But you say, ‘How are we robbing thee?’ In your tithes and offerings. . . . Bring the full tithe into the storehouse.”

The assumption is that God is the owner of all things. Turning to the New Testament we hear the same basic principle sounded again. In the Parable of the Talents Jesus is saying that whatever we possess, we possess because it has been given by God’s hand. And from the gift, some return to God is expected. The Parable of the Laborers in the Vineyard describes the proposition that God is a giver of gifts and that God’s gifts exceed anything we can do to earn them. The words of the parable, “Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me,” put in the mouth of God, is a proclamation of God’s ownership of His creation. Indeed, the earth is the Lord’s, and we are the recipients of great gifts.

It seems to me that any coherent theology of money, the earning, spending, and giving of it, must begin with this.

This principle is expanded for a Christian in one magnificent way. The greatest gift of God to us has been the gift of His Son, Jesus Christ, and, through him, the opportunity to live in the power of the Holy Spirit. Clearly, when we have thought about the gifts of the earth, life and the human qualities of body, brain, talents, and the like, and identified these as gifts of God, we have only scratched the surface.

The Motive For Giving

Now, what has all this to do with our giving? It is my belief that all this sets the motive for giving, a motive that is at once biblically sound and fundamentally appealing. We give because that is one way we have of directly expressing our thanksgiving to God for these gifts. The purest of motives for giving is to give because we have been given to. Giving can be our thankful response to God, who has given to us.

It is critical to note what that kind of motive does to (or for) the giver. To ask him to give out of thanksgiving is to ask him to relate creatively with his God and not to a parish budget. This makes giving a matter of spiritual life rather than a matter of parish survival. It asks a person to be a Christian with his money and not just a fund raiser or a budget supporter.

It seems, at least to me, that a foundation built on these principles is not only desirable but essential to any stewardship effort. Indeed, built on such a foundation, our considerations of stewardship can then open up the genuine possibilities of spiritual growth, both in the life of the individual Christian and in the life of the parish as a whole.

But how does all that relate to our need to support a parish program and budget? There are two clear implications in what we are saying.

1. If Christian stewardship is anchored in the relationship of a person and his money, then Christian stewardship will relate to a person’s

income, how he earns it, how he spends it, and how he decides to return a portion of it to God. It does not relate to the Church's program or budget needs.

2. It follows then, that the stewardship campaign needs to be conducted prior to the formation of the parish budget. The stewardship question ought never to be "How much do we need?" The basic question needs to be, "What do I have out of which I can conscientiously return to God?" Our need is to give to God and not to a budget. When we pledge to the Church, we are giving to God, and not just to the Church. Therefore, our appeal needs to be directed toward a person's income, not toward the parish's need. Parish budgets need to be considered only after the stewardship campaign is completed.

What Kind of Program?

We come now to the question many of you have no doubt been asking: What kind of program can we establish in our parishes? What are the nuts and bolts of a parish stewardship program?

A successful stewardship program requires a great deal of in-depth study, and organizational effort. It has to be thought through carefully, planned in detail, and tailored to the particular character of each parish. Numerous books on the subject are available for study and adaptation. I have prepared and included at the end of this paper a Stewardship Bibliography, which gives a fairly representative selection of materials on the subject.

The bottom line of any decent program, however, will be anywhere from a 15% to a 35% increase in financial support for your parish. Can you really afford not to develop a stewardship program for your church?

Although the limited length of this paper does not permit going over every detail in a model stewardship program, I would like to mention a few of the major elements in any program. First, we should count on our preliminary work beginning some four months before the actual stewardship campaign. You'll be using this time with the members of your stewardship committee. You will need to select a chairman who is capable of handling the task. It goes without saying, that the chairman, as well as the other committee members, must represent the most enlightened leaders in your parish. If an individual feels that stewardship won't work among your people, if he thinks that the only way to raise funds is by using the three "B's" - Bingo, Bazaars, and Bake Sales, then by all means keep him off the stewardship committee. The battle cry of such persons is "Onward to Yesterday." They really are not qualified for the demanding task of stewardship.

Your committee members must be among the most generous of your parishioners. Don't misunderstand me, the man or woman who gives the highest dollar amount is not necessarily the most generous giver. A physician or a businessman with an income approaching six figures is not particularly generous if he gives a thousand dollars a year. The amount may well represent only one percent of his income. That man is not a committed steward. The amount he gives may be large, but proportionately, it is quite negligible. Therefore, the pastor must see that the committee members are themselves truly generous.

Proportionate Giving

At this point, we must talk about a crucial, crucial concept. It is the principle of proportionate giving.

Proportionate giving involves two points:

1. That our level of giving needs to rise out of our level of income.
2. That giving out of thanks for God's blessings will involve sharing a portion of that income with others. This is proportionate giving.

A great deal is said today about tithing as the highest form of proportionate giving. The 10 percent tithe has often been held up as the standard for Christian stewards. And there are a great many advantages to endorsing such a standard.

1. It is a biblical standard.
2. It is related to income and not to a church's budget.
3. It has a "universality" about it, in that the concept is as old as the early Old Testament.
4. It could produce an astronomical amount of money in gifts

However, in spite of these advantages, I am frankly not at all that attracted to it. First, it is a legalistic system. Second, it is an Old Testament concept that is not picked up in the New Testament.

The fact is that no specific percentage adequately expresses our stewardship before God. The fundamental relationship of God and man is not that of a master to a steward. The New Testament relates God and man, not as a master and steward, but as father and son. The qualities of the son are thankfulness, love, joy, and intimate relationship. It is in the qualities of our sonship that the concept of proportionate giving has its foundation. It can be stated this way: as sons of God we have the "why" of our giving as proportionate givers. We express that sonship in a practical manner. The system can be described very easily. Take your annual gross income and simply multiply it by the percentage that you want to share with God in your material giving. Then simply divide that amount by the weeks in one year. The amount you come up with seldom comes out to even dollar amounts (see chart) But that has the real value of moving away from the prison that puts gifts in round numbers without basing the giving on any

systematic measure. A weekly gift of an odd amount \$9.23, for example will continually focus attention on the percentage and will be a constant affirmation of the person as a proportionate giver every time the check is written. The major advantages of proportionate giving are:

1. It puts the emphasis where it belongs on giving out of income.
2. It keeps a person honest about his giving; honest about the real value of his gift in relation to what he has. The measure is not by pure dollar amounts, against what others with more can give, or against what others with less are able to give. The measure remains where it needs to be, yourself against yourself, what you give against what you have.
3. It allows every person to stand on equal ground as givers. The giver with modest income who gives 3 percent of that income is able to be affirmed in his giving along with the big giver who gives 3 percent of a much larger income. Their dollar amounts will vary considerably, but each is sharing equally with God through the Church out of what he has.

Planning and Executing the Program

I have attempted to describe some of the foundation blocks on which we build. We come now to the very practical problems of planning and executing the actual stewardship campaign in a parish.

The elements we need to put together include the following:

1. A clear understanding of our theology about money.
2. A detailed calendar of all events necessary for the introduction and implementation of a stewardship program in the parish.
3. A plan for the home visitation of each parishioner.
 - a. A specific method by which those who visit the homes are selected.
 - b. A specific way of training home visitors.
 - c. A specific way of assigning calls to each home visitor.
4. A system detailing:
 - a. The content and timing of preliminary mailings explaining the stewardship program to the parish.
 - b. The content and timing of sermons by the priest and talks by lay people about the program.
 - c. A system and time for home visits of the parish members.
 - d. Deadlines to be met by those making the visits.
 - e. Clean-up dates for all remaining home visits.
 - f. Plans for reporting results to the parish membership.

Some of us may be put off by the apparent complexity of a full-blown stewardship campaign. And, indeed, the effort will require study, planning, prayer, and time. But God and His Church - our Church deserve our best possible efforts. Can we offer Him less?

A Guide to Proportionate Giving (in 2003)

If your Annual Gross Income is:	Your Proportionate Weekly Gift Would Be:				
	3%	4%	5%	10%	12%
\$20,000	\$11.54	\$15.38	\$19.23	\$38.46	\$46.15
\$25,000	\$14.42	\$19.23	\$24.04	\$48.08	\$57.69
\$30,000	\$17.31	\$23.08	\$28.85	\$57.69	\$69.23
\$35,000	\$20.19	\$26.92	\$33.65	\$67.31	\$80.77
\$40,000	\$23.08	\$30.77	\$38.46	\$76.92	\$92.31
\$45,000	\$25.96	\$34.62	\$43.27	\$86.54	\$103.85
\$50,000	\$26.92	\$38.46	\$48.08	\$96.15	\$115.35
\$55,000	\$31.73	\$42.31	\$52.88	\$105.77	\$126.92
\$60,000	\$34.62	\$46.15	\$57.69	\$115.38	\$138.46



ST. MARY'S PARISHIONER ATTENDS 47TH PRESIDENTIAL INAUGURATION

Story and Photos by Alexandra Miller, St. Mary's Orthodox Church, Coladale, PA.

During my trip to Washington DC on January 26-30 I had the experience of a lifetime, and I was able to see history in the making at the 47th Presidential Inauguration. On the first day of the High School Presidential Inaugural Scholars Conference, I was finally able to meet all the friends I had made online through the conference website. The total population of the conference was around two thousand scholars so there was not a single moment where you were not meeting or making new friends. So now that friends and connections were made it was time for dinner followed by nighttime entertainment from The Capitol Steps. It was a great way to unwind at the end of a busy first day. The second day is when all the fun truly began. I finally got to meet the rest of my fellow scholars who were in my group of fifty scholars total. We discussed the roles of the President and all that he does for the United States of America. This meeting was followed by a presentation from former Secretary of State Dr. Condoleezza Rice. She told my fellow scholars and I to never give up on our hopes and dreams, and that whatever we chose to do in life as long as we set our mind to it we will become successful. Later that evening I was also able to see another presentation from world known reporters Nick Clooney and the very talented Bob Woodward, who was one of the reporters who broke the Watergate scandal.

Now came the day that I have waited for for an entire year and the whole point of the conference, the day of the Inauguration. The normal half an hour trip took an hour and a half on this crazy and historic day. Once we arrived in DC we headed straight for the National Mall, where we stood in the first section of private viewing for five hours. It was very cold, but it was also an experience of a lifetime. We all watched as famous politicians from all around the United States came and cheers filled the mall. During those five hours my group and I truly felt what it was like to be a proud American. We saw both the President and Vice President of the United States be sworn in on this historic day.

This article has been edited for space - for the expanded article and more photos of Alexandra's trip, go to doepa.org/inauguration

I have so many people to thank for allowing me to attend the conference. None of it would have been possible without the help from the many Orthodox churches, friends, and family that all helped me in fund raising money to even be able to go to the conference. I will never forget anything that I had learned over this fantastic week and I am so grateful to have such an amazing support system to help me reach all my current and future goals in life.

CALENDAR

August 12	Diocesan Council Meeting	Holy Apostle's Orthodox Mission, Mechanicsburg
August 17	Women's Retreat	St. Tikhon's Seminary
August 18	Divine Liturgy	Holy Assumption Orthodox Church, Philadelphia
August 22-24	OCPM Board Meeting	Philadelphia
August 25	Liturgy	Holy Trinity Orthodox Church, Pottstown
September 8	Liturgy	St. Mary's Orthodox Church, Coaldale
September 17-19	Assembly of Bishops	Chicago, IL
September 22	Clergy Wives Retreat	Christ the Saviour Orthodox Church, Harrisburg
September 22	Liturgy	St. John the Baptist Orthodox Church, Edwardsville
September 24-26	Metropolitan Council Meeting	Syosset, NY
October 6	100th Anniversary	Holy Ascension Orthodox Church, Lykens
October 15-18	Holy Synod Meeting	Syosset, NY
September 19-20	40th Anniversary	St. Herman Orthodox Church, Shillington
September 26-27	100th Anniversary	Holy Assumption Orthodox Church, Philadelphia



FINAL CALL!

LAST CALL GRADUATES!

Add one more thing to your post-graduation to do list! The Fall issue of *Alive in Christ* will feature our 2013 High School and College graduates. *Alive in Christ* would be honored to share your accomplishment with the Diocese. Submissions will also be posted on the Diocesan website. Instructions can be found at

www.doepa.org

SEEKING CHOIR DIRECTOR

HOLY TRINITY • Catasauqua

seeks a choir director to lead our choir in Divine Liturgy services. For more information, please contact James O'Brien at 610-682-7888 or Suzanne Cressman at 215-407-7336.

More information on this position is available at www.doepa.org/announcements