

Good Orthodox Christian Stewardship Practices

Key Practices/Principles

1. You need a method – “Pledging” preferred
2. You have to ask.
3. Leaders lead – Parish Council pledges *first*
4. Stewardship before fund raising – *bake sales; bingo & incessant special collections*
5. Many pre-requisites: (see box >>>>)
6. Need stewardship goals – *median pledge; participation rate*
7. Tithing is Orthodox
8. Start Early – *youth; newbies; annual cycle*
“The second half of a man’s life is made up of the habits he acquired in the first half” Dostoyevsky
9. Priorities -- Not budgets
10. Say “Thank you” -- Often
11. Spiritual & Practical - Giving connected to Spiritual Growth
12. Not for sissies!

Factors Affecting Our Ability to Improve Donation Levels in Our Parish

Driving Forces >>>>	<<<<Retarding Forces
Dire need	“Habit”
Understanding our relative wealth	“Don’t have it”
We have an opportunity here to...	Don’t understand stewardship
Love of God	Lack trust that God will provide
Love of parish –want it cared for	“we spend too much” / Poor fiscal mgt
Opportunities for ministry	Incessant special collections
My donation has enduring value	Waste – prolonging the inevitable We look backward not forward
Sense of concern for others	“Parish council not in favor”
Gratitude for our inheritance	“We’re getting by” (real /imagined)
Our identity as people of God	“I give my time”
Sense of responsibility Sense of future	Fear negative reaction to asking

Set Member Expectations

1. **Confession/Communion**
 2. **Regular Attendance**
 3. **Pray Regularly**
 4. **Pledge first fruits**
 5. **Study/Grow in Faith**
 6. **Accept a Ministry**
Time & talent
 7. **Spread the Gospel**
Use words & example
- Members are those Orthodox Christians who understand what it means to build up the body of Christ. They do this by making a true commitment to our parish. Membership makes a person’s baptismal vows specific to the parish, its work and its people.

Pre-Requisites

1. Sense of membership/commitment
2. Good fiscal practice/orderly parish
3. Parish Vision –sense of direction/future
4. Structured ministries – landing places
5. Pledge Effort

Needed Resources/Actions

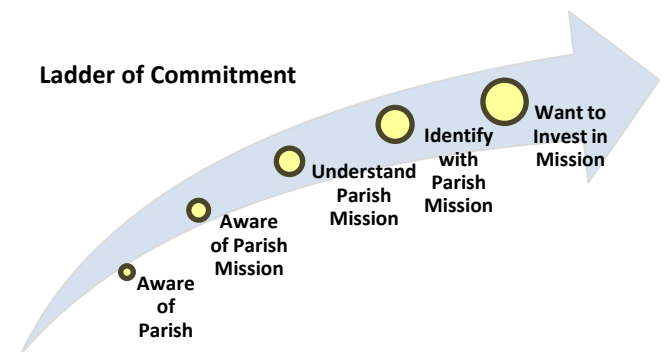
- Defined member expectations
- New member manual; Assimilation efforts
- Regular reports; good software; Treasurer; Well run annual meeting
- Mission and Vision Priorities ♦
Vision budget ♦ Ability to dialogue
- Leader development; Ministry plan
Ministry oriented Parish Council
Ministries brochure
- Stewardship team ♦ Stewardship formation – young/old ♦ Pledge form ♦ Letter ♦ Brochure, ♦FAQ ♦ Segmented f/u plan

Vision

- People give because they believe in the result. A solid future
- Helps us give greater attention to future generations – not ourselves.
- “What can we do for this parish today for the sake of this parish tomorrow?”

Mission ⇒ Vision ⇒ Values ⇒ Priorities ⇒ Goals ⇒ Actions

Ladder of Commitment



Does our parish have a vision big enough to generate a donation of \$10K? \$100K

Useful Stewardship Questions

1. How do you view the role of money in your life?
2. Is generosity a core value of a Christian?
3. Is it possible to lead miserly lives (*or lives of great indulgence*) while giving little to the church or other charitable organizations yet attending and considering oneself to be a person of faith?
4. How do you decide what you will give back to your parish?
5. Have you considered tithing/proportional giving? Why? Why Not?
6. How important is the parish/Orthodox Church to you and your family? *Vs. other aspects of your life.*
7. What is our responsibility to future members of this parish... our children of ... and their children?
8. What do we need to be doing for them?
9. What is our parish’s responsibility outside our walls?
10. How well do we meet it?
11. What aren’t we doing that we should be in the parish?
12. What would it take? What would you need to see the parish doing for you to become truly enthusiastic about making a meaningful pledge to the parish?

Sample Pledge Forms

Metropolia Era Parish Diocese of Midwest

2013 STEWARDSHIP PLEDGE
WITH LOVE IN JESUS CHRIST

With thanks to God for all of my/our blessings and the desire to be a steward of His Ministry, as a commitment to support His Holy Church I/we pledge:

Name _____

Envelope # _____ Date _____

(Select one) \$ _____ Weekly
 \$ _____ Monthly
 \$ _____ Annual

Please return completed pledge card by December 1, 2012

Metropolia Era Parish Midwest Diocese

This Commitment I Make in Remembrance of Christ:

- 1 To pray daily.
- 2 To receive Holy Communion frequently.
- 3 To come to Holy Confession at least once a year.
- 4 To return to God the first fruits of the gifts He has bestowed on me.
- 5 To assist in spreading the Good News of Jesus Christ in Cleveland and beyond.
- 6 To live out my personal commitment to Christ through loving service to others.
- 7 To support my parish, my diocese and the Orthodox Church in America of which I am an essential part.



Something to pray about:

Gross Annual Income	Percentage of Annual Income Contributed Weekly to St. Theodosius Orthodox Cathedral			
	2%	5%	8%	10%
\$10,000	\$4.00	\$10.00	\$16.00	\$20.00
\$15,000	\$6.00	\$15.00	\$24.00	\$30.00
\$20,000	\$8.00	\$20.00	\$32.00	\$40.00
\$25,000	\$10.00	\$25.00	\$40.00	\$50.00
\$30,000	\$12.00	\$30.00	\$48.00	\$60.00
\$35,000	\$14.00	\$35.00	\$56.00	\$70.00
\$40,000	\$16.00	\$40.00	\$64.00	\$80.00
\$45,000	\$18.00	\$45.00	\$72.00	\$90.00
\$50,000	\$20.00	\$50.00	\$80.00	\$100.00
\$55,000	\$22.00	\$55.00	\$88.00	\$110.00

As a responsible steward I/we commit for the year 2009, \$ _____ /week to support the ministry of Christ at St. Theodosius Orthodox Cathedral.

Name: _____

OCA Era parish Diocese of Midwest

2013 Stewardship Pledge Form
XXXXXXXXX
ORTHODOX CHURCH

Name _____

Email _____

Address _____

Phone _____

A number of families in our parish tithe 10% of their income to the church. I/we would like to join them.
Our pledge is \$ _____ /yr.

I/we cannot tithe right away, but would like to begin a plan to move toward tithing.
An initial pledge toward this goal is \$ _____ / yr.

I/we pledge \$ _____ to the church for 2013.

Thank you for your responsible and generous support! Please return by Nov. 25, 2012



Mission Community --Diocese of South

Yearly Financial Commitment Form
(to be filled out and turned in to treasurer Betty Novak)

With thanks to God as a good steward of His gifts and with faith, hope, and love, I/we will offer our financial commitment to God's work at Holy Resurrection Orthodox Church, recognizing that the tithe (10%) is the standard of Christian giving to which I/we are called to strive as members of the Diocese of the South, Orthodox Church in America.

My/Our financial commitment and generosity to Holy Resurrection Orthodox Mission enables HROM to fulfill the mission of the Orthodox Church in America to the CSRA in regards to making disciples, baptizing, teaching, preaching, witnessing to the truth, and by God's grace and in the power of the Holy Spirit, to reveal Christ's way of sanctification and eternal salvation to all.

My/Our yearly financial pledge is _____

signature(s) _____

date _____

Family Name _____

Our Identity as Christians

It is easy to understand that we are created by God. Understanding the spiritual dimension of stewardship reminds us that we are created for God.

We are His servant. Our bodies are not our own. We are not our own – and all the things we have are not our own.

We are stewards of what God has given us.

...teaches us to... Trust God

As people created for God we trust God. We remember that God, not us, makes things happen.

God provides what is important ... though not necessarily what we want.

In order to receive God's trust we need to be trustworthy. We express this, in part, by how we handle our material resources.

...and enlivens a spirit of... Gratitude

Gratitude is born from trust -- and being trustworthy. We gratefully focus on things given to us. We see everything as a gift.

In the liturgy we act accordingly by gratefully giving back to God -- "thine own of thine own we offer unto thee".

Gratitude helps us to appreciate what we do have and to stop seeking what we don't need.

...reminding us to give back to God in Love... to care for His Church

Love is a requirement of being a Christian. It is not optional.

Giving helps us not focus on ourselves. If we are required to love then we also must be able to give.

Loving spouses share a mutuality of receiving and giving. If we only received that would not be love. We give back to return the love.

It becomes the challenge of a steward to see the Church not as a building or even a collection of people but as someone we love. We then see the responsibility - expectations & accountability - that comes with that loving relationship.

If we can love a spouse we can love the Church. Treat the church the same way you would treat your spouse. Is she well provided for?

A Spiritual View of Stewardship: Identity, Trust, Gratitude & Love