

To: God From: You Pastor Letter

Dear:

Throughout the past month we have learned about living as grateful and responsible stewards of God's many gifts. We have prayed, reflected upon our gifts and talents, discerned how we might use our talents for the benefit of the PARISH NAME community. This week I invite you to reflect upon your use of money and your gifts of financial resources to PARISH NAME and other charities of your choice.

Many people immediately and incorrectly associate stewardship with finances—oftentimes tithing. I hope the last several weeks have helped you to understand that stewardship is a way of life, a way of recognizing all of one's gifts, being grateful for these gifts, and giving back in gratitude.

When considering a gift of financial resources, stewardship invites us to pray about our use of money and then invites us to make planned and proportionate gifts. A simple way to discover how we spend our money is by reviewing our checking account or credit card statements. Do our spending habits reflect what is most essential? Is there anything that could—or should—be changed? Have the last several weeks invited us into a different way of living, a way of living where God is at the center and our priorities are properly aligned?

In reflecting upon Jesus' life we are granted numerous examples of stewardship. We see in Jesus his total emptying of self. We see a man listening for and heeding God's call, a man who sacrificed his life for a greater good. Jesus asks us to give him our lives, to love as he loved, to share freely and generously and from the heart as did the poor widow who gave little, yet gave everything.

A key component of stewardship is the interior change that takes place when a person internalizes the magnitude of the love God the Giver and Owner has for us. Once that is recognized, giving freely and generously is a natural response. Only you will know the amount of that gift, the gift that will change you, that will be granted from your "first fruits", not from what is left over. I invite you to pray about this and to give back to God—sacrificially—as God has given to us.

May God continue to bless you, your family and our parish.

Sincerely,

Pastor Name

P.S. Please clip the Declaration of Intention at right and return it in the enclosed envelope at next Sunday's liturgy.