



Stewardship Calling

THE "GOOD AND FAITHFUL STEWARD CHALLENGE CAMPAIGN" (*Living The Parable Of The Talents*)

A. What is the Good and Faithful Steward Challenge Campaign?

In the Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14-30), the Master gave out differing amounts of money to three servants and came back to see what they did with the gifts they were given. To those who were good stewards and put them out into the world and caused them to multiply, the Master rewarded them by bestowing the high honor of being "*Good and Faithful Servants*" and gave them much more.

This lesson teaches us to take whatever gifts we are given (regardless of how much or how little), and to use them to help others for God's greater glory on our journeys to theosis and a "*good account before the awesome judgment seat of Christ*" (II Corinthians 5:10). This same lesson can be taught by an Orthodox Christian church, and in so doing, it will change its culture of stewardship and generosity.

CHALLENGE SUMMARY

1. You receive a cash gift
2. Use it to glorify God helping the less fortunate
3. Return a card noting:
 - Who you helped?
 - How they reacted or felt?
 - How it made you feel?

All you have to do is give all of your parishioners some money and challenge them to find creative ways of putting it out into the world and causing it to multiply. They then merely share how it made them feel, and what the response was from the recipients. In so doing, we teach proper Christian stewardship and generosity, and we change our parish culture and the communities in which we live and serve. This document describes some things to think about in doing just that.



THE GOOD AND FAITHFUL STEWARD CHALLENGE

"As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God" (1 Peter 4:10)

B. Here are some things to think about in designing your Parish's Good and Faithful Steward Challenge Campaign.¹

1. Planning

- Come up with a name/brand for the campaign.
- Plan it carefully before rolling it out. Create a series of messages (and testimonials) before you first announce it. Try and keep it confidential until you make a big reveal announcement of the program after you have your PC (or Philoptochos or a Donor) on board.
- Decide what your goal is for the entire campaign and design the campaign to achieve it – (X% parishioner family participation, \$X given back impact, 10% increase in parish stewardship contributions, etc.)
- Decide if it is just for all current stewards as of a certain date or some other way to distribute the funds. In an event, it is very helpful to make sure youth are directly included, either through their own Sunday School program where they get a smaller amount, or to encourage a family decision about who gets the money.
- Decide if everyone receives a set amount or if it is a randomly chosen variable amount in the envelopes (i.e., to be similar to different people getting 5 talents vs 2 talents vs 1 talent or based on family size, etc.).
- Decide if you will ask the parishioners to contribute back any monies after they put the donated money to work if they are moved to do so. Or just leave it up to them to decide for themselves. Or just announce if anyone makes a big gift back.
- Determine the timeline for the roll out and distribution of the funds and when you want the impact cards returned with how they cause the gifts to multiply. You can do a rolling distribution but consider having a reasonable end point (e.g., you are to report 3 months after you receive the envelope, or by X date)

2. Designing

- Pick the amount you want to give out. – (It's OK to solicit a donor or group (e.g., Philoptochos) to cover the amount, or use a festival excess profit fund or other charitable fund to provide the money.)

¹ For further information or questions, contact Bill Marianes at Bill@stewardshipcalling.com www.stewardshipcalling.com

- Consider laying a challenge out there – (e.g., the number of people helped = X or the amount given out in the aggregate is raised in return contributions, or some other metric to demonstrate success).
- Decide if it's OK if they keep the amount for their personal needs if they are in need.
- Allow for anonymity in filling out the impact cards of what they did to cause the gift to multiply, but make sure everyone is encouraged to respond by turning their impact card back in.
- Consider doing a “marketplace event” or “charity fundraising event” where people can take the money and make stuff to sell to the public and use those proceeds as the multiplier to do something good in the community (determined in advance) as the beneficiaries of the amount raised at that event.

3. Marketing

- Explain clearly the impact card they are to complete that describes what they did with it. Design a powerful impact card with Matthew 25 scripture and compelling image and places for them to: 1. Identify what they invested in; 2. How it made them feel; 3. What they heard from the recipient.
- Anticipate and prepare an advance response for the skeptics and critics. Cover the response in advance in a positive way in the homilies and written materials in the bulletin or in the explanation letter or all of the above.
- Create Parish bulletin, website and/or other reminders and report stories of progress continuously.
- Find a way to encourage families to discuss what they will do with the investment and all participate in its multiplying.
- Keep the program top of mind.
- Use this program as a way to encourage them to change their church stewardship habits to tithing, or at least percentage giving, or the “round up” (where they increase their contribution to the next highest whole number percentage of their income that they donate to the church)
- Get a local newspaper or TV or radio show to publicize this program.
- Create publicity regarding the successes achieved for the Parish, Metropolis and Archdiocese publications in an effort to inspire others to “go and do likewise.”

4. Deploying & Interim Communications reporting

- Orchestrate a big event or special Sunday or series of events to have the biggest impact.
- Ensure a comprehensive process is implemented to engage every steward and make sure they all receive an envelope and impact card with instructions.
- Keep the program top of mind for the parishioners.
- Encourage people to personally share testimonials in church (and in written publications) regarding what they did and how it made them feel to supplement the anonymous responses.
- Post the impact cards on a parish bulletin Board (and social media and website) where people can be inspired by the stories

5. Closing Schedule and results report

- Set a time table for the deployment of the investment donations and return of the impact cards (i.e., let the servants know “when the master is returning”).
- Publicize the final results and have people share testimonials about the impact this program had in their lives and in the community on a continuing basis.

Sts. Constantine & Helen GOC – Webster MA – Good and Faithful Steward Challenge

<http://schwebster.org/about/good-and-faithful-servant/>

St Matthew’s Church version of “Adventures in Stewardship”

<https://georgiabulletin.org/news/2007/11/parish-joyful-as-stewardship-adventure-ends/>

<https://georgiabulletin.org/news/2007/05/tyrone-church-transforms-treasure-with-talent/>



**Stewardship
Calling**

*Helping people and parishes discover and
live their stewardship callings so that
they may have a good account before
the awesome judgment seat of Christ*

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