



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)

As we celebrate the 100th Anniversary of our Church, we want to ask ourselves: **Who are we as Orthodox Christians and as the Church? What do we want to be known for as a Church?** We are:

- ◆ A Church Family that worships and loves God above all else
- ◆ A community which shows our love for God through the love we show to one another as well as through the love we show to those outside our church
- ◆ A community of faith that reaches out to the world shining God's light in a dark world

We have a **CHALLENGE** for steward (every family and every individual) in the Church, which is based on The **PARABLE OF THE TALENTS** (or the **PARABLE OF THE GOOD STEWARD**) from Matthew 25:14-30

1. WHAT WE ARE GOING TO DO:

Our Church is going to give every family (or individual steward) in our church a gift!

- ◆ We will give everyone either \$300/\$200/\$100 cash (according to the size of the family)
- ◆ We will then ask you to use this gift *to glorify God!*
 - ◇ How can we *glorify Him through noticing and helping others?*
 - ◇ Be creative in the ways that you use this gift to glorify God.
 - ◇ If you have children, get your children involved in how to use this money. Teach them the lesson of what it means to be a good and faithful steward.
- ◆ You don't have to return this money. We want you to use it in a faithful and good way!
 - ◇ Look around with the eyes of God. See how you can use this to share God's love
- ◆ After you have used this money, we want every family to fill out a card and return it to the church by a set date, explaining:
 - ◇ What you did with the money to glorify God?
 - ◇ How did it make you feel when you were helping someone else?
 - ◇ What was the response, or how did those you reached out to feel?
- ◆ When you return the card, you don't have to put your name on the card if you don't want to. Any response may be anonymous, unless you want to send us pictures of what you did with your gift. Ultimately, remember that God sees and knows what you did with His gift!

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?

2. WHY ARE WE DOING THIS “Good and Faithful Steward Challenge?”

This challenge is a community event in which we want to *show ourselves* and *show people outside this community* “WHO WE ARE” as Orthodox Christians and as a Church, and what is the VISION and MISSION of our Church.

- ♦ We are ambassadors of God’s love to the world around us
- ♦ We can be faithful and good stewards of this gift
- ♦ We want to discover the JOY of giving and sharing God’s love.
- ♦ We want to better understand Christ’s words, “*It’s more blessed to give than to receive*”
- ♦ We want to cultivate eyes that look for and see the needs of others all around us
- ♦ We want this Challenge to remind us that God calls us to be good and faithful stewards with every gift we receive from Him in our lives.

We think this challenge is unique. The Church isn’t asking for money from you, but is giving out money to show WHO WE ARE! This is NOT a gimmick but can become a powerful teaching experience that will touch the lives of many others.

- ♦ Our Church will give out \$30,000!
- ♦ We are taking this money from a legacy gift that Emmanuel Pappas has given the Church, and honoring his spirit of giving, which was an imitation of the philanthropic spirit of Jesus Christ.

3. HOW WILL WE DO THIS?

We will divide up the 150 stewards of our church into three groups and give each group its gift at different times over the next five months

- ♦ 50 stewards (Sunday school families, parish council members, and Bible Study group) will receive their gift on the kick-off for our 100th Year Anniversary on November 24, 2019
- ♦ The second group of 50 stewards will receive their gift at the beginning of February (around the time when Great Lent begins)
- ♦ The final group of stewards will receive their gift in April, so they can offer their deeds of love around the Paschal season.
- ♦ We want each group to send back their cards telling us how they glorified God with the gift they received, how they felt when this used this gift, and how did the people whom they helped feel.
- ♦ We will publicize and share the stories of what everyone did with the entire community, which will hopefully inspire one another with the ways we glorified God

4. WHAT ARE SOME EXAMPLES OR IDEAS YOU CAN DO TO GLORIFY GOD?

- ♦ Look around and find someone in need. Listen to their story (if they want to share it with you), and offer them a gift from God and our Church. Don't just give someone money, but also give them your attention and your time.
- ♦ Take a homeless person out for a meal and ask them to tell you something about their life.
- ♦ Ask every member of your family to add something to the church gift. For example, if you have three children, ask each of them to contribute an additional \$50 and have the parents put in an extra \$200. So instead of the original \$300 gift, you will now have \$650 to use
- ♦ Use the gift to buy ingredients and bake something. Sell what you make on a Sunday during coffee fellowship. Maybe you can increase your initial gift of \$100 to \$300. Then use the increased money to bless someone in an even greater way.
- ♦ Buy yarn and knit blankets or hats for the Children's Hospital, or make prayer shawls that we can give to people who are sick
- ♦ Help someone struggling with their rent.
- ♦ Buy 10 Dunkin Donuts cards (or some other gift cards) with the \$100 gift and randomly give them to people, wishing them a blessed day. Tell them this is a gift from God and your Church.
- ♦ Pool your money together with other people (three Sunday School families who get \$300 each can pool their money so they have \$900 to use.) Be creative and do something on a bigger scale, like sponsoring a meal at our Living Bread Luncheon, and giving each of the 100 guests a special gift?
- ♦ Sponsor a child in Project Mexico, or an orphan in Africa, or a priest's family through the OCMC.
- ♦ Or come up with your own idea!!! We are excited to hear all the different ways our Church Family will glorify God through this Challenge!!!

- ♦ Remember, this is all about reaching out to others in need, and glorifying God through acts of love and kindness. We DO NOT want you to spend this money on beautifying our church or doing something for our church. This challenge is all about seeing God in our neighbor and reaching out to those in need. Of course, if there is someone in our Church Family who is going through a particularly difficult time, and need this money, then consider this gift for them!
- ♦ BE CREATIVE! Talk with one another and share the excitement about what you are doing. Let us inspire one another to greater acts of love!
- ♦ Let's GET EXCITED about this project! Discover the JOY OF GIVING!
- ♦ Imagine if we all start talking with one another on Sundays about what we're doing, discuss how we're helping others, share the beautiful feeling we receive when we love others in concrete ways, and then encourage and excite one another to deeds of love!

5. Frequently Asked Questions

Is this a wise way for the Church to use \$30,000? We have a line of credit to pay down. We have a leaky roof. We have other needs we should take care of in our Church.

- ◆ Our church has an operational budget that should take care of specific needs in our church. We believe, however, that using money in this way can be a very special blessing because we are doing what Christ teaches. The “Good and Faithful Servant Challenge” represents a concrete lesson and reminder about WHO WE ARE as Orthodox Christians and WHO WE ARE as a Church Family. This challenge also reminds us about what we want to be known for! We are a Church that notices people in need and concretely reaches out to them with God’s love!

Aren’t we also trying to raise \$100,000 for the 100th Year Anniversary? Won’t this challenge hurt this fundraising campaign? Or will people give less money towards stewardship because they see our church giving away \$30,000?

- ◆ We hope that when our community sees what we are doing through the “Good and Faithful Steward Challenge,” and how we are faithfully using our resources in a way that follows Christ’s teachings and glorifies His name through the love we show to others, that this effort will inspire everyone to support the ministries and work of our Church even more than they do now!

Where is this \$30,000 that the church is giving away coming from?

- ◆ The seed money of \$30,000 comes from Emmanuel Pappas’ legacy gift to the church. Manny was a philanthropist who lived a life helping others. Manny gave \$100,000 to his beloved Church to help repave and expand our parking lot and landscape the outside. Manny left in his Will another \$150,000 to the Church. We honor Manny’s memory and legacy of giving by imitating his spirit.
- ◆ We hope the way we use Emmanuel Pappas’ legacy gift will inspire others in our Church to think about how they also can glorify God in their life, and even after their death by including the Church in their Will.

What else do we hope to happen from this Challenge?

- ◆ This is a special opportunity to get everyone in our church engaged and involved in a unique event highlighting our 100th Anniversary and reflecting on “Who We Are.”
- ◆ We want people to come to a new understanding of stewardship
- ◆ We want people to experience the joy of giving.
- ◆ We want people to look around and notice the needs of others all around us.
- ◆ We want the larger community to see our Church as a loving, caring, and compassionate community