

A Call to Conversion: Sacrificial Giving

God offers us opportunities each day to turn our hearts and minds toward him and his mission for us to bring about his kingdom. God calls us to step into a new way of seeing, thinking and acting—into conversion. As Henri Nouwen, spiritual writer and source of inspiration for many puts it, “The converted person sees, hears, and understands with a divine eye, a divine ear, a divine heart.”

SO, WHAT DOES THIS HAVE TO DO WITH HOW I DECIDE TO SHARE MY TREASURE?

As we decide how we will share our gift of treasure with others, we may want to spend a few moments and reflect on the meaning of sacrificial giving and how it is an invitation from God toward a deeper relationship with Jesus and the community of which we are a part, along with an opportunity for turning our eyes, ears and hearts toward the divine.

WHAT IS SACRIFICIAL GIVING?

Sacrificial giving is a biblical concept that can help us see the connection between our faith life and our financial obligations. Our finances are not a separate parts of our lives, nor are they meant to be compartmentalized. The way we view our finances and the ways in which we choose to save, spend and share those resources is deeply influenced by our relationship with Jesus and the vitality of our spiritual life.

SACRIFICIAL GIVING IS...

Placing God first and recognizing that all we have is gift from God, we gratefully return to God a portion of the abundance he has bestowed. Through prayerful consideration we decide what portion to return to God by contributing to the parish and to those in need. This portion is taken from the first fruits, meaning it is a measure of our financial resources that has been considered first and not what is left from the budget after other bills and obligations have been met.

“YOU SHALL ALSO GIVE HIM THE FIRST FRUITS OF YOUR GRAIN AND WINE AND OIL, AS WELL AS THE FIRST FRUITS OF THE SHEARING OF YOUR FLOCK...” -DEUTERONOMY 18:4

Sacrificial giving means we give a little bit more than we think we might be comfortable giving. By the very definition of sacrifice, this is something offered to God for the purpose of doing God’s work now and bringing about the kind of world God wants for his people. By this action, we make holy the work we have done all week and we witness to our belief that we are coworkers in the vineyard with our Lord.

“WITH EACH CONTRIBUTION SHOW A CHEERFUL COUNTENANCE, AND PAY YOUR TITHE IN A SPIRIT OF JOY.”
-SIRACH 35:8

Sacrificial giving means we make our offering consciously and consistently, and using the offering envelope can be a sign that we make the work of the church a priority in our lives. In our families, especially to our children, this can be a powerful witness to the commitment we have made.

“THROUGHOUT YOUR GENERATIONS YOU SHALL GIVE A CONTRIBUTION TO THE LORD...” -NUMBERS 15:21

QUESTION FOR SELF-REFLECTION:

How do you measure up when you look at the chart on the back?



GUIDELINES FOR GIVING

Assess where you are on the chart below based on your income.
 Pray and reflect on your income and expenses as an individual and/or family. Are you giving at least 1 hour per week's wage?
 Decide if you can take a 1/2 or 1% step up in giving.

IF YOU EARN		YOUR WEEKLY GIVING WOULD BE...									
Hourly	Monthly	Yearly	2.0%	2.5%	3.0%	3.5%	4.0%	4.5%	5.0%	10.0%	15.0%
\$2	\$347	\$4,164	\$2	\$2	\$2	\$3	\$3	\$4	\$4	\$8	\$12
\$5	\$867	\$10,404	\$4	\$5	\$6	\$7	\$8	\$9	\$10	\$20	\$30
\$7	\$1,213	\$14,556	\$6	\$7	\$8	\$10	\$11	\$13	\$14	\$28	\$42
\$13	\$2,253	\$27,036	\$11	\$13	\$16	\$18	\$21	\$23	\$26	\$52	\$78
\$17	\$2,947	\$35,364	\$14	\$17	\$20	\$24	\$27	\$31	\$34	\$68	\$102
\$20	\$3,467	\$41,604	\$16	\$20	\$24	\$28	\$32	\$36	\$40	\$80	\$120
\$23	\$3,987	\$47,844	\$18	\$23	\$28	\$32	\$37	\$41	\$46	\$92	\$138
\$25	\$4,333	\$51,996	\$20	\$25	\$30	\$35	\$40	\$45	\$50	\$100	\$150
\$27	\$4,680	\$56,160	\$22	\$27	\$32	\$38	\$43	\$49	\$54	\$108	\$162
\$30	\$5,200	\$62,400	\$24	\$30	\$36	\$42	\$48	\$54	\$60	\$120	\$180
\$33	\$5,720	\$68,640	\$26	\$33	\$40	\$46	\$53	\$59	\$66	\$132	\$198
\$35	\$6,067	\$72,804	\$28	\$35	\$42	\$49	\$56	\$63	\$70	\$140	\$210
\$40	\$6,933	\$83,196	\$32	\$40	\$48	\$56	\$64	\$72	\$80	\$160	\$240
\$45	\$7,800	\$93,600	\$36	\$45	\$54	\$63	\$72	\$81	\$90	\$180	\$270
\$50	\$8,667	\$104,004	\$40	\$50	\$60	\$70	\$80	\$90	\$100	\$200	\$300
\$55	\$9,533	\$114,396	\$44	\$55	\$66	\$77	\$88	\$99	\$110	\$220	\$330
\$60	\$10,400	\$124,800	\$48	\$60	\$72	\$84	\$96	\$108	\$120	\$240	\$360

God generously provides for us. We in turn are called to return a portion of our Treasure to provide for and to support God's work and God's people. God calls upon us to generously and faithfully ensure a strong faith foundation for the next generations. We are accountable and responsible for our Treasure and its use.

The benchmark for giving sacrificially is the biblical tithing—sharing ten percent of time, talent, and treasure. The practice of tithing is mentioned 39 times in the Old Testament and 11 times in the New Testament. The financial tithing is usually divided in this way:

- 5% of gross income to the **parish Sunday collection**,
- 1% to a **Diocesan Appeal**, such as Catholic Charities, and
- 4% to your **other charitable concerns**.

What is important is that your contribution is planned and proportionate to your income. You may choose the manner that suits you best. You may give weekly, monthly, or annually. The preferred method is automated giving, or consistently using contribution envelopes.