

Did You Realize...

Questions & Answers in Generous Giving

DON'T CATHOLICS ALREADY GIVE MORE THAN OTHER RELIGIOUS GROUPS IN THIS COUNTRY?

In fact they don't. Catholic giving lags behind other religious groups. According to a Gallup Poll conducted for a study by Independent Sector, Catholic households contributed on average less money to the Church and charities than members of all other religious groups in the United States: Catholics - 1.3% of annual income; Protestants - 2.4% of annual income; Jewish 3.8% of annual income; All other religions - 2.7% of annual income.

WHAT IS THE CATHOLIC CHURCH'S TEACHING ABOUT TITHING?

Most Christians understand tithing means giving 10% of their gross earnings in gratitude to God for their many blessings. Our diocese recommends 5% for your local parish, 1% for diocesan appeals, and 4% to other charitable organizations.

HOW MUCH DO I HAVE TO GIVE?

The answer is: nothing. We don't have to give anything. "How much do we want to give?" is the question that grateful givers must ask. Giving as much as we can, from the heart, is a faithful response in gratefulness for the generous gifts God has provided. Rather than asking, "How little can I give and still be responsible?" consider asking yourself: "How much can I give without being irresponsible?" We ask that you prayerfully discern your decision to make a more planned, proportionate, and sacrificial gift in support of [insert parish name] mission and ministries. For where your treasure is, there also will your heart be (Mt 6:21 NABRE).

I CANNOT GIVE 10% OF OUR GROSS EARNINGS, BUT HOW CAN I START TO LIVE MORE SACRIFICIALLY?

For most Catholics, tithing would represent a substantial leap from their current level of church and charitable giving. You can, however, consider taking a step to increased giving. For example, if you are currently giving 1% of your income, consider taking a step in giving to 1.5% or 2% in the coming year.

In simpler terms: did you know that contributing just one hour's wage per week equates to 2.5% of your income? Make a promise to yourself that you intend to maintain this new level of sacrificial giving during the next year.

DOESN'T OUR PARISH HAVE ALL ITS NEEDS MET?

Your increased contribution will broaden your parish's ability to reach a greater number of souls through mission and ministry—there is always more ministry to be done as disciples of Christ. "While many Catholics are generous in giving of themselves and their resources to the Church, others do not respond to the needs in proportion to what they possess. The result now is a lack of resources which seriously hampers the Church's ability to carry out its mission and obstructs people's growth as disciples" - (USCCB Pastoral Letter, Stewardship: A Disciple's Response 6).

QUESTION FOR SELF-REFLECTION:

Those who observe how I live will come to know Jesus as.....*(fill in blank)*.

On a scale of 1-5 (1: needs improvement; 5: outstanding), how well are you stewarding the gifts that God has placed in your care?

