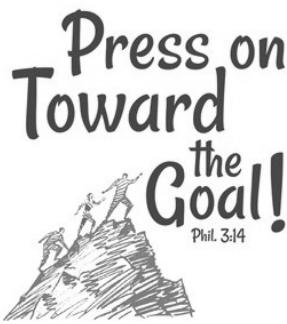




From the Pastor

Part 5: Becoming Intentional Disciples— *Press on Toward the Goal (Phil 3:14)*



Stewardship is a way of living each day in gratitude for all the blessings that God has given us. We are here on earth to use God's gifts **to do God's work**. Giving time and talent does not excuse us from giving treasure. We can demonstrate that we put God first by making a conscious effort to make a financial gift to God first, before we pay our bills and buy the things we want.

Why does the church need your gifts? Your contributions help to pay the staff, to provide faith education, to pay the utility bills that keep the lights on, and keep the rooms cool in summer and warm in winter. As a Church and a School, we provide a Catholic education and evangelize children and their families. We purchase many supplies needed for the office, liturgies and sacraments—including hosts, wine, candles, oil, prayer books, and hymnals, and so on. None of these items are free. Contact the Parish Office if you would like to get a copy of the church expenses to see how your contributions are spent. The church entirely depends on your weekly contributions. Your absence in the church does not bring down the expense.

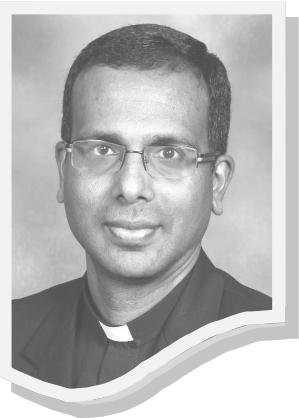
The Bible teaches us to give 10% of our income to God: 5% to the church and 5% to diocesan charities or to other charities of your interest. One of the questions that invariably many ask is “do we calculate the 10% to God on our

gross (before tax) or our net income? The answer is “on our gross income.” The reason is that stewardship calls us to give back to God first. If you want to know how much we should be giving to God, there is a simple formula:

Take your annual pre-tax income and round it to the nearest thousand. Then take off the last three zeros. For example, a person making \$40,000 annually would take off the last three zeros and be left with \$40. This would be your weekly tithing that makes up 5%.

There are many ways in which you can give your gift to God. Some of them are: a gift of securities, a charitable gift annuity, a charitable rollover gift, a gift of a life insurance policy, an estate gift through your Will, a year-end gift, an endowment gift to honor your loved one(s), and so on.

If you need more information on this, the office can help you. Commitment in the area of finance is something that we all of us are reluctant to do. But that is essential to place God first in our lives. This is a test of your faith and trust in God. The “First Fruits” / Commitment Weekend was last weekend. I have turned in my stewardship pledge card. Have you? God bless your sacrifices on behalf of His Church. “Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully” (2 Cor 9:6).



—Fr. Jose Thomas Mudakodiyil