



Being the Light and
Lighthouse for
True Christian Stewardship



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Host



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Guest Presenter



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Featured Presenter

Welcome and Introductions

- Welcome & Ministry Message
- Opening Prayer & Message
- Introduction to Tonight's Speaker
- Speaker Presentation
- Q&A and Group Discussion
- Closing Comments & Prayer

Thank You!

- For your time
- Your service
- Your (presumed) willingness to try new things

Problem

You've been asked to chair the parish stewardship "drive".

Having been unable to dodge this...

What to do next?

Some suggestions...



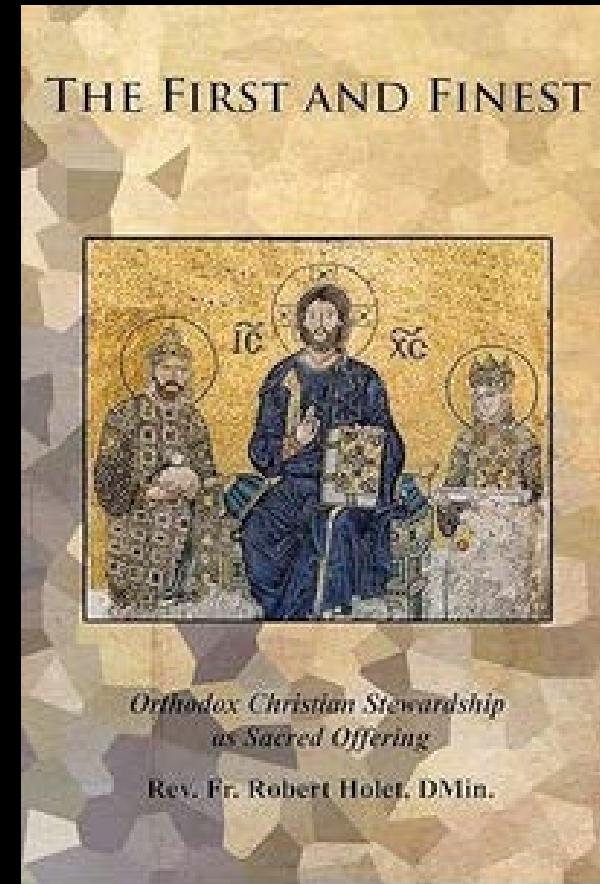
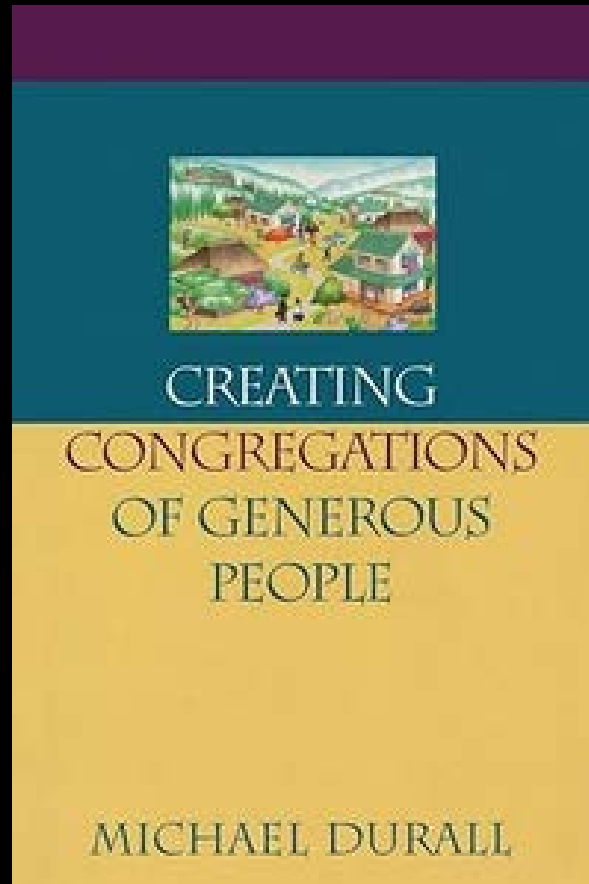
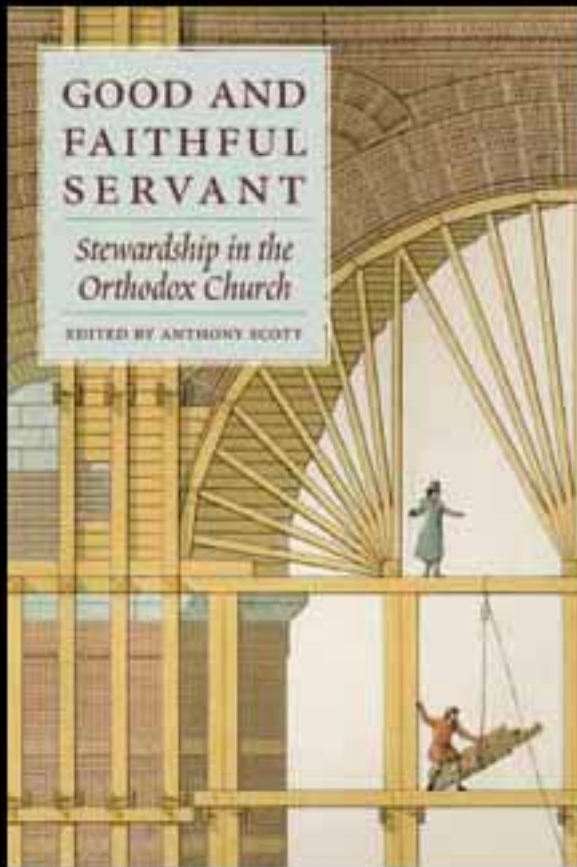
Principle 1: Stewardship Ministry Team

Goals

- Increasing “*Meaning*” of Christ and His Church
- Motivate generosity
- Leading to “investment”



Read?



Principle 2: You Have to Ask?

A Method

But How?

- **Pledging** strongest method. (IMO)

The Debate?

- Focus on Spiritual Dimension -- or Practical?

Principle 3: Start with Why: Gospel Centered Message

Identity, Trust, Gratitude & Love

Our **Identity** *as Christians*

It is easy to understand that we are created *by* God. Understanding the spiritual dimension of stewardship reminds us that we are created *for* God.

We are His servant. Our bodies are not our own. We are not our own – and all the things we have are not our own.

We are stewards of what God has given us.

...teaches us to...

Trust God

As people created *for* God we trust God. We remember that God, not us, makes things happen.

God provides what is important ... though not necessarily what we want.

In order to receive God's trust we need to be *trustworthy*. We express this, in part, by how we handle our material resources.

...and enlivens a spirit of...

Gratitude

Gratitude is born from trust -- and being trustworthy. We gratefully focus on things *given* to us. We see everything as a gift.

In the liturgy we act accordingly by gratefully giving back to God -- "thine own of thine own we offer unto thee".

Gratitude helps us to appreciate what we *do* have and to stop seeking what we *don't* need.

...reminding us to give back to God in
Love... *to care for His Church*

Love is a requirement of being a Christian. It is not optional.

Giving helps us *not* focus on ourselves. **If we are required to love then we also must be able to give.**

Loving spouses share a mutuality of receiving *and* giving. If we only received that would not be love. *We give back to return the love.*

It becomes the challenge of a steward to see the Church not as a building or even a collection of people but as *someone* we love. We then see the responsibility - expectations & accountability - that comes with that loving relationship.

If we can love a spouse we can love the Church. Treat the church the same way you would treat your spouse. **Is she well provided for?**

A Spiritual View of Stewardship: *Identity, Trust, Gratitude & Love*

Principle 4: Many Pre-requisites

Pre-Requisites	Needed Resources/Actions
Stewardship Ministry	Stewardship team ♦ Stewardship formation
Structured ministries – <i>landing places</i>	Leader development; Ministry plan Ministry oriented Parish Council; Ministries brochure
Good fiscal practice/ orderly parish	Clear reports; Transparency; Good software; Finance ministry; Well run annual meeting
Sense of membership/ commitment	Defined member expectations New member manual; Assimilation efforts
Parish Vision –sense of direction/future	Mission and Vision Priorities ♦ Vision budget ♦ Ability to dialogue

Principle 5: Set Member Expectations

Members are those Orthodox Christians who understand what it means to build up the body of Christ.

They do this by making a true commitment to our parish.

Membership makes a person's baptismal vows specific to the parish, its work and its people.

1. Confession/Communion

2. Regular Attendance

3. Pray Regularly

4. Pledge first fruits

5. Study/Grow in Faith

6. Accept a Ministry

Time & talent

7. Spread the Gospel

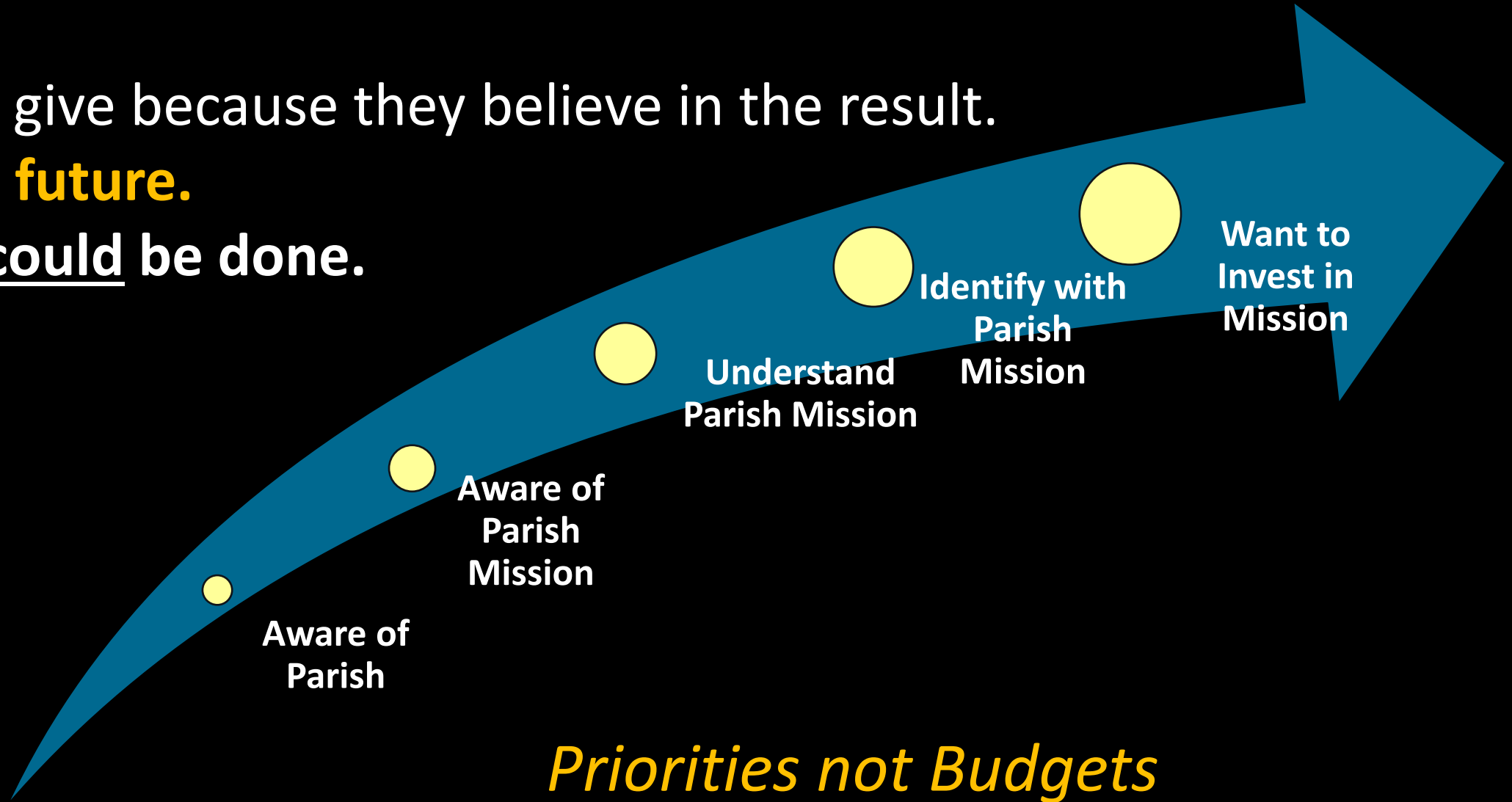
Use words & example

Principle 6: Vision –Not Begging

People give because they believe in the result.

A solid future.

What could be done.



Principle 7: Ask Good, Challenging Questions

1. Is generosity a core value of a Christian? How do you view the role of money in your life?
2. Is it possible to lead miserly lives (*or lives of great indulgence*) while giving little to the church or other charitable causes yet attending and considering oneself to be a person of faith?
3. How do you decide what you will give back to God through your parish?
4. Have you considered tithing/proportional giving? Why? Why Not?
5. How important is the parish/Orthodox Church to you and your family? *Vs. other aspects of your life.*
6. What is our responsibility to future members of this parish... our children... and their children?
What do we need to be doing for them?
7. What is our parish's responsibility outside our walls?
How well do we meet it? What aren't we doing that we should be in the parish?
8. What would it take? What would you need to see the parish doing for you to become truly enthusiastic about making a meaningful pledge to the parish?

Principle 8: Start Young and New

- Start young – build generosity
 - Children
 - Youth
 - Young adult
- Start “new”
 - Intro to parish

“The second half of a man’s life is made up of the habits he acquired in the first half”

Dostoyevsky



Principle 9: People Value Different Focus Areas

Tailor Communication to Motivation

Many Pockets of Giving

- Operations
- Local charitable
- World charitable
- Education
- Capital Improvements/Major repairs
- Evangelization -- Growing Orthodoxy in America



More Principles

10. Leaders Lead – Parish Council pledges first

11. Personal stewardship *before* fund raising

See: <https://www.ocadwpa.org/fundraisingandfestivals>

12. Say “thank you” often; Teach *generosity* often

13. Tithing is Orthodox

Again: Stewardship Ministry



Stewardship Ministry Team | *Actions*

1. Assess stewardship baseline; set goals
2. Competently communicate Christian generosity.
3. Tell the story of parish accomplishments. 'Here is how our parish used parishioner donations this year. Collect or take photos to bring the story to life.
4. Work with PC to understand long term parish priorities -- particularly those requiring solid budget support --this may include *pushing* the parish council to focus on bigger picture.
5. Answer the "why" question? Share priorities to answer the question of 'Why should our parishioners return more to the parish? What do we hope to achieve?
6. Plan the timeline, print copies of stewardship materials, distribute.
7. Frame responses to common objections
8. Explain parish stewardship practices to new members or young adults who should now support the parish. Answer questions.
9. Follow up with non-participating or late responding parishioners.
10. Ask for generous commitments from parishioners who are in a position to expand support.

Thank You!

(Again!)

More info: <https://www.ocadwpa.org/stewardship>

Typical Objections

“I’ll get back to you”

“I’ve got a lot of things up in the air right now.”

“Orthodox don’t (pledge/tithe)”

“What is a pledge?”

“What’s wrong with the old way?”

“I don’t want to be involved”

“I give in other ways”

“We don’t need more money.
We spend too much already.”

Key Practices/Principles

1. Stewardship Ministry
2. You need a method for asking effectively – “Pledging” preferred
3. The Why- Gospel Centered message; Giving connected to Spiritual Growth
4. Many pre-requisites
5. Membership Expectations
6. Forward Vision: Priorities -- Not budgets
7. Ask good questions
8. Start young and New
9. Tailor communication to motivation
10. Leaders lead – Parish Council pledges *first*;
11. Stewardship before fund raising – *festivals; sales; & incessant special collections*
12. Say “Thank you” – Often. Teach generosity more than once/year.
13. Tithing is Orthodox

Factors Affecting Our Ability to Improve Donation Levels in Our Parish

Driving Forces >>>>	<<<<Retarding Forces
Dire need	"Habit"
Understanding our relative wealth	"Don't have it"
We have an opportunity here to...	Don't understand stewardship "Parish council not in favor"
Love of God	Lack trust that God will provide
Love of parish –want it cared for	"Waste" "we spend too much" / Poor fiscal mgt
Opportunities for ministry	Incessant special collections
My donation has enduring value	We're prolonging the inevitable; We look backward not forward
Sense of concern for others	Insular/ inward view
Gratitude for our inheritance	"We're getting by" (real /imagined)
Our identity as people of God	"I give my time"
Sense of responsibility / Sense of future	Fear negative reaction to asking