

Because Everything Comes from God: Giving in Gratitude and Trust

Our 14-year-old son, Charlie, plays guitar in a band. A true “garage band,” he and his friends practice in our garage, scrounging up various pieces of equipment to make it work. Up to this point, they’ve been plugging their microphones into guitar amps—not ideal, especially when playing gigs. A better sound system is needed.

With his sight set on a real speaker system, Charlie spent this summer working various jobs - cutting grass, walking dogs, helping with landscaping - to earn the money needed. Recently, we counted the cash he accumulated. He was \$50 short. I remembered seeing a few \$20 bills on his dresser and asked, “What about the money in your room?” Without hesitation, Charlie replied, “That’s the money I’m giving to the church.”

That was certainly a proud dad moment. His response brought me back to something I heard a priest share at a Stewardship Conference years ago:

“My need to give is more important than the parish’s need to receive.”

God Has Given Me Everything

Everything comes from God: our abilities, opportunities, homes, possessions, work, family and friends...our life circumstances...every morning that we wake up to a new day...even the very breath we take – all gifts! King David expresses this beautifully in his prayer of praise:

“For everything is from you, and what we give is what we have from you.” - 1 Chronicles 29:14

This should change the way we think about giving. We aren’t giving God something that belongs exclusively to us, we are returning in GRATITUDE a portion of what He has first entrusted to us.

GRATITUDE and TRUST go hand-in-hand. We give because we are grateful to God for what has been given to us, and because we trust that God will continue to provide for us. We also trust that God will use our gifts for the good work and ministries of the parish.

Most importantly, when we give from our first fruits (not just what is left after everything else is taken care of), truly giving sacrificially, we trust that God will continue to provide, because God is generous and we cannot outdo His generosity! (Malachi 3:10) Therefore, sacrificial giving is such a powerful spiritual exercise. It teaches us that our money is not our security - God is. Even in times of hardship or uncertainty, God is asking us to trust Him. With every gift, we are saying: “Lord, I believe You have given me everything I need. I believe You will continue to care for me. I trust You enough to give back to You first.”

This brings us back to Charlie. The parish didn’t need those \$20 bills in his room nearly as much as Charlie needed the opportunity to give them. That money could have gone toward his speaker system. Financially, keeping it would have made sense. He had worked for it. He had earned it. He was only \$50 short.

Somewhere along the way, all those stewardship conversations we’ve had in our house took root, and Charlie decided that a portion of what he had earned belonged to God. His gift wasn’t primarily about what the church would do with his money, it was about what giving would do in him.

I’m positive that before long, the music in our garage will be pulsating through the rest of the neighborhood much louder than before. For now, a precious gift from God lives in Charlie – to live in gratitude and trust for what he has, and what is yet to be, and to see his Loving Creator with him each step of the way.

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