

### ***Pledging to Give in Stewardship***

We continue to consider **pledging** (promising) **to give** (to transfer in love for free) **in stewardship** (as those who manage value in trust for the true owner).

#### *Article 9*

### **What is an Offering?**

Most years, we hear about stewardship as part of the effort to keep the parish balance sheet in the black. So, we have the usual annual drive in which we pledge our **tithes** to fund our budget. The other way of giving mentioned by God in the Bible is by **offerings**. There are 162 Bible verses that have the word “offering,” and additional verses are found in the writings of the Fathers. These commands, teachings and advice show an offering to be a sacrifice of something of value, given not grudgingly, but with love and thanksgiving to God. When King David requested funds to build the Temple we read in 1 Chronicles 29:9,

*Then the people rejoiced, for they had offered willingly, because with a loyal heart they had offered willingly to the Lord; and King David also rejoiced greatly.*

How could the people in David’s Kingdom be joyful *after giving money*? They had offered freely to God, in thanksgiving, and with love.

**Offerings Don’t Replace Tithes.** An “offering” means a gift given to God beyond the tithe, never in place of the tithe or reducing the tithe in any way. Offering opportunities are typically for special causes, either large or small. Offerings are not in fixed proportion to income. You determine the amount in prayer based upon your understanding of the need, and your ability to give. In Luke 21:1-4 we read,

*And Jesus looked up and saw the rich putting their gifts [offerings] into the [Temple] treasury, and He saw a certain poor widow putting in two small copper coins. He said, “Truly I say to you, this poor widow put in more than all of them; for they all out of their surplus put into the **offering**; but she out of her poverty put in all that she had to live on.”*

The widow took to heart the proverb, “For those who are willing to give, God will provide.” Christ praised her action.

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