



THE SANCTUS

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TRACT CORNER

TITHES, GIFTS, AND OFFERINGS

INTRODUCTION

Tithing is an old practice extensively mentioned in the Old Testament which has been practiced by Christians since the beginning. It means giving ten percent of income to the service of God. It is the basic biblical rule for individual participation in God's work on earth, the extension of Christ's kingdom.

Those who tithe on their incomes without question are happy in their decision, but others may desire first to discover what God's will is for them. As in all decision making, this means first knowing the relevant information about tithing, and especially what the Bible says about it. Prayer for guidance and illumination is essential, for tithing is a relationship, if not an agreement, with God. Paying one's tithe is not an offering, offerings are made in addition to the tithe; the tithe is the normal obligation, an offering is an additional sacrifice of thanksgiving and praise.

TITHING IN THE BIBLE

Tithing is personal finance management in accord with biblical principles. It began in the Garden of Eden when God reserved one tree to himself, and in Genesis 28:20-22, we read that Jacob vowed a vow to God, saying, "*If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, ... and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee.*" God later changed Jacob's name to Israel, and from him descended the nation used by God for the coming of his Son Jesus Christ.

In Leviticus 27:30-34 there is a passage which includes this plain statement, "*And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the Lord's: it is holy unto the Lord*" and, "*And concerning the tithe of the herd, or of the flock, even of whatsoever passeth under the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto the Lord.*"

After the remnant of the Israelites returned from the exile in Babylon, they had to reestablish the Temple and its services so that the nation could again grow into strength and righteousness. Nehemiah contended with them, "*Why is this house of God forsaken? And I gathered them together, and set them in their place. Then brought all Judah the tithe of the corn and the new wine and the oil unto the treasuries.*"

In the last book of the Old Testament, the book of Malachi, God said through the prophet, "*Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meal in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open to you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.*"

In agrarian societies, tithes were often paid in real goods such as wheat or cattle, sheep, etc. People in modern communities have to make other arrangements.

In Genesis 14:20 there is one of the first indications of tithing when Abraham gave "*tithes of all*" to Melchizedec who "*brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God.*" Melchizedec is a figure in the Bible which foreshadows Christ. See the prophecy of the coming Christ in Psalm 110, "*Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedec*" and the proclamation by the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews of Christ as our Great High Priest, after the order of Melchizedec, Hebrews 6:10, 7:1-22. Through this connection the biblical requirement to tithe jumps right out of the Old Testament and points to Christ, and his body the Church, as the rightful receiver of tithes in our time.

St. Paul wrote to the Corinthian church, "*Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God has prospered him*" (1 Cor. 16:2). This clearly shows the rule to give in proportion to income.

DOES THE CHURCH REQUIRE TITHING?

The Anglican Church does not have a hard and fast rule of tithing, but also one cannot say there is no rule when the application of a given biblical rule is the subject, but there is under God freedom to make personal responses to him. An Anglican church for example does not demand that its members go to confession once a month, so it is with tithing, the church must teach the desirability of these things but leave room for individual responses to God.

To lay down a hard and fast rule would mean greater sacrifice to the very poor, including many of the elderly. If someone had only the old age pension a tithe would be unjust and impracticable, and there may even be members to whom the church would give financial help.

HOW MUCH FOR THE CHURCH?

The Bible is definite that a tithe means a tenth part, and this is not hard for a tithe is proportional to income. The less we earn the less our tenth, the more we earn the more our tithe. The question, "How much should our tithe to the church be if not a tenth part?" The answer is that a tithe is a tenth part. We recite from the Prayer Book, "All that is in the heaven and earth is thine. All things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee". All things belong to God, but he has placed some under our stewardship, and allows us to keep ninety percent for our own use.

When King David was seeking a place to build an altar to the Lord he was offered a gift of a property, but David said "*Neither will I offer burnt offerings unto the Lord my God of that which doth cost me nothing.*" The lesson is that a gift to the Lord is not a genuine gift if it costs nothing, a genuine gift is a sacrifice as were the burnt offerings made by ancient Israel, the animals to be destroyed were the most precious without spot or blemish, and in being burnt they were destroyed without tangible benefit or profit - they were sacrificed. In one of Israel's battles with the Philistines, King David longed for a drink of water from the well of Bethlehem which was behind the enemy's lines, so three of his fighting men broke through the enemy and brought the water to him. The water was doubly precious now because valiant men had risked their lives for it. King David in worship then poured it out unto the Lord as a sacrificial offering (2 Sam. 23:15, 16). So, does the idea of tithing rankle? Then praise God for the opportunity to make a sacrifice for him.

A DANGER IN EQUIVOCATION

We can be led to believe that charitable efforts outside the Church are "equal in all respects" to God's work through the Church, which is rather an arrogant supposition. The Son of God healed people when he walked the earth because he had compassion on them, but

his purpose was not primarily the healing of the sick and feeding of the poor; it was the salvation of the world. He instructed us "*Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*" (Mat. 28:19). A medically healthy world with no hungry people in it is not necessarily a saved world, but a world completely saved through Christ would be free from sickness and hunger. To equate our worldly charitable work with God's work is to put things "back to front." The first duty of Christians is to build the Church and support her missionary work and to help the sick and poor of the world with our gifts and offerings.

God uses our money to finance his projects. Who will give to God for the building of his Church and the extension of his kingdom if we do not? The way of the cross is the way of sacrifice.

THE GIFT OF GIVING

There is great joy in giving, not just satisfaction from a sense of duty performed, but a joy in the spirit. In some people the ability to give is a gift they themselves have received. This same gift is available to all Christians; to obtain it one must ask God for it. The widow woman Jesus saw putting her two mites into the Temple treasury must have had the gift of giving, for, as Jesus said, she had put in all the living she had (Luke 21:1-4).

In some churches the offering time is called the "blessing time" because of the joy of giving. Many people also are not content with a tithe, but when they reflect upon God's blessings upon them they double-tithe, that is twenty percent. The idea of tithing may be difficult to accept at first but it soon becomes a pleasure.

Although the word tithe indicates a rule of giving, one cannot, indeed must not, make this a legalistic rule. God requires that we have freedom to choose for ourselves, for this shows us and him how much or how little we care. We must learn what the Holy Scriptures say on the subject, and then meditate and pray about our responses. However, when praying about this subject, it is necessary to be completely honest and face all the facts and variables of the subject, especially assessing one's own motives.

Finally, we should not tithe because a church demands it, or because of peer pressure, but only because we want to do it: firstly, if one is really convinced that God requires it; secondly, because a love for Christ makes us want to do it; and thirdly, because of the joy of giving to the Lord.

Almighty God, whose loving hand hath given us all that we possess: Grant us grace that may honor thee with our substance, and, remembering the account which we must one day give, may be faithful stewards of thy bounty; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

(From the Convent Society of the Anglican Catholic Church of Canada)

SHIELD OF ALL SAINTS AWARD

Each year the Vestry reviews and discusses names of various parishioners who have given particularly exemplary service to our church. We seek to recognize these men and women with what is called the "Shield of All Saints" award. This medal, fashioned after the emblem of our church, is presented to these parishioners as a tangible way of expressing our gratitude and recognizing all that they have done.

This year, at the Feast of All Saints Luncheon, Father Hines happily presented awards to Bill Jepson, Christine Hall and Will Spencer. As many of you are keenly aware these people have done much for the progress and prosperity of our church home. We as a parish family are extremely grateful to them, and we pray that God may richly bless them as they have in turn richly blessed us.

We all have been blessed with differing gifts and talents – let us use them to the greater glory of God and to the continual growth of His Kingdom on earth. "All things come of thee O Lord, and of thine own have we given thee."

SENIOR WARDEN'S REPORT

Our celebration of All Saints Day and the Tenth Anniversary of the parish on Sunday, November 5, was a fine experience. Thanks to those who served at the Altar with Father Hines at the Solemn High Mass, to the Parish Choir, and to Aleksa, David and Erik Petersons who performed the prelude before the Mass.

We all appreciated the traditional All Saints Day Salad Luncheon hosted by the ACW. We thank ACW President Sue Ross and all the women who brought salads and those who took care of setup and cleanup. Without a doubt, the presentation of the "Shield of All Saints" awards at the salad luncheon was the highlight of our observance. This special recognition and the service given to the parish by the recipients are outlined in an article by Father Hines in this issue of *The Sanctus*.

One of the most interesting and enjoyable aspects of our observance was the display in the undercroft prepared by Marie and Will Spencer, which took us through the history of All Saints since the parish was founded in 1996. This display took a great deal of time and effort to plan and assemble, as did the photographs of all parish organizations. We are fortunate that the history of All Saints is being so well documented by Will and Marie.

We exceeded our goal of \$500 for Thanksgiving Baskets, so this year we are able to provide for six families. The families assigned to All Saints by the Bolingbrook F.I.S.H. organization will receive their baskets at the church on Saturday, November 18.

Sunday, November 12, is "Pledge Sunday" and this special parish meeting will be held in the nave immediately after Mass. Treasurer Bob Wilson and incoming Treasurer Carol O'Sullivan will review the Proposed Parish Operating Budget for 2007, provide information on our special funds and accounts and take care of any questions and suggestions any of us may have. Pledge cards for 2007 will be distributed.

Please mark your calendar for the Annual Parish Christmas Party to be held Saturday, December 2, hosted by Carol and Val Petersons at their home in Warrenville. Give your attention to the sign-up sheet in the narthex as soon as you can.

The landscaping behind the south wall of the church was completed last week. Thanks to Carol O'Sullivan who purchased the bushes and "trucked over" 45 bags of top soil required for the planting. With a few more items to add this spring, the landscape project will be completed. Please consider supporting the Altar Guild's project to provide new Altar Hangings and Vestments, and take a look at the display in the narthex which illustrates all the items required. Having the funding secured and everything on order in December will be a fine way to mark the Tenth Anniversary of All Saints.

Bill Jepson
Senior Warden

MITTEN TREE

The ACW is sponsoring a "Mitten Tree" outreach project with the hope that the entire parish family will participate. On November 26 a tree will appear, ready to be decorated with new mittens (or gloves) to warm the hands and hearts of needy school children in our local DuPage Township area. On Monday, December 11, they will be delivered for distribution as a Christmas blessing before the holiday break. Last year, All Saints contributed 81 pairs of mittens and gloves. Let's hope that we do as well or better this year!

Libby Bolton
Chairman

THIRD ANNUAL COOKIE WALK

Please plan to participate in this popular event on December 10! Each family is requested to contribute six dozen homemade cookies that we will then sell for \$6.00 per styrofoam container. After Mass, we hope all parishioners will enjoy viewing the beautiful display of cookies of all kinds and then purchase an assortment of your choice. We also have Christmas tins available for \$1.00 each. Friends of parishioners are invited to participate – we will begin “the walk” at 10:45 AM. A signup sheet will be in the narthex. Please call me with any questions. Cookies should be brought to the church by 9:15 AM on December 10. Please call me at 985-0320 if you need to have your cookies picked up. Proceeds from the Cookie Walk are contributed to our seminary.

Jane Munsie
Cookie Walk Chairman

ANGLICAN CHURCH WOMEN

The Provincial ACW provided ACW pins to members attending the national convention held during the weekend of the recent pilgrimage. Addition pins can be ordered for \$10.00 each. Please see me for further information.

Please note the next ACW sponsored Jewel Shop & Share days will be December 11, 12 and 13. This will be a great opportunity to purchase holiday groceries and support the ACW! Coupons will be available in the narthex later this month. Please share them with family, friends and co-workers.

Sue Ross
ACW President

Dates to Remember

Tuesday, November 7,
All Saints Church Youth Meeting, 7:00 PM

Sunday, November 12,
Pledge Sunday

Sunday, November 19,
Vestry Meeting
F I S H

Thursday, November 23,
Thanksgiving Day Mass, 9:00 AM

Sunday, November 26,
Mitten Tree Collection begins

Please note:

Father Hines will be out of town Monday, November 6 through Friday, November 10 (no weekday mass).

ALL SAINTS CHURCH YOUTH

On October 17, we celebrated the birth of our dear rector, Father Hines, at the home of the Brushes with grilled steaks and chicken, baked potatoes, corn bread, and salad, followed by birthday cake and ice cream. The whole Adebowale family attended. We sang “Happy Birthday” and Father Hines blew out lots of candles. We also said a special birthday prayer for him from the Book of Common Prayer.

Our next meeting will be on November 7 at the church at 7:00 PM. This will be an important meeting as we will discuss a potential trip to Mexico next summer (together with a youth group from Rushville, Illinois) to help with the construction of a home for a family in need. The potential dates are June 13-23, 2007.

Dan and Fabi Brush
Youth Leaders

ALL SAINTS ANGLICAN CHURCH: A parish in the Anglican Province of Christ the King. A nationwide body of traditional Anglican churches dedicated to the Anglo-Catholic Faith and traditional Episcopal liturgy. For more information visit : www.anglicanpck.org or www.allsaintsanglicanparish.org. Tell people about us – there are many fellow Christians out there who are hurting and are feeling both hopeless and lost.

All Saints Anglican Church
(Traditional Episcopal)
Using the
1928 Book of Common Prayer

131 East Boughton Road
Bolingbrook, IL 60440
630 783-8280

WEBSITES

www.allsaintsanglicanparish.org
www.anglicanpck.org

Holy Eucharist and Church School
Sundays at 9:30 AM
Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays
At 10 AM and Wednesdays at 7 PM
The Rev. John A. Hines, Rector

Newsletter Editorial Staff

Fr. Hines

Marcia Wilson

Technical Assistant

Bob Wilson

If you have any questions, comments, suggestions or

wish to contribute in any way,
please contact Fr. Hines or Marcia Wilson.