Archdiocese of Newark
Grateful Disciples Initiative

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Dear Friend in Christ,

   Stewardship is an important part of the Christian life. It is important to our spiritual growth as individuals, families, and parishes. In a spiritual and temporal sense, adopting stewardship as a way of life transforms us and changes the life of our parish as a whole. As baptized members of the Body of Christ, we should take every opportunity provided to us to live and promote stewardship as a way of life. I like to define stewardship simply as **what you do with what you have when you believe in God**.

   We should begin with answering the Lord’s call to discipleship. This has astonishing implications:

   - Committed disciples make a conscious decision to follow Jesus, no matter the cost.
   - Disciples experience on-going conversion—life-shaping changes of mind and heart—and commit their very selves to the Lord.
   - Disciples are ambassadors and stewards of Christ’s mission in the world.
   - Embracing stewardship forms us to be Christ-like by serving others through our generosity of time, talent and treasure.

   As disciples, we recognize God as the origin of life, giver of freedom, and source of all things. We are grateful for the gifts we have received and are eager to use them to show our love for God and for one another. We look to the life and teaching of Jesus for guidance in living as Christian stewards.

   Since the beginnings of the Church in Jerusalem, the followers of Jesus embraced stewardship as a way of life. It was a fundamental aspect of discipleship then and it remains a powerful process by which God converts the hearts and minds of His children. When embraced fully, stewardship can transform individuals, parish communities, and an entire diocese.

   In order to reach out to our Spanish speaking faithful and to introduce the important role of stewardship in the Christian life, the Archdiocesan’s Office of Development and Stewardship will be promoting **Stewardship: Grateful Disciples** to help parishioners connect with life in the parish. This program will assist in sharing with the faithful the principles of ownership, responsibility, accountability, and the rewards of stewardship. Our Hispanic community has much to offer through its spirit of worship and devotional expressions.

   Thank you for the many ways in which you continue to support the Church of Newark.

   Sincerely in Christ the Redeemer,

   [Signature]

   Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R.
   Archbishop of Newark

   jn
Archdiocese of Newark

Grateful Disciples Initiative

Stewardship: Grateful Disciples is a new initiative to help parishioners connect with life in the parish through presentations to make a connection between faith and a generous spirit of service and giving.

Parishioners relate far more readily to God's blessings than to a parish budget or ministry they don't understand. When motivated to give out of gratitude, they begin to give the gift God really wants: themselves.

Emphasizing parish needs encourages minimal giving. Emphasizing the personal need of the giver to give, and motivating people to do so out of gratitude, maximizes both giving and its spiritual benefits: deepened faith and Christian joy.

Charles Zech, a stewardship and development professional states: “Stewardship is returning to our Heavenly Father a portion of the many blessings He has given us, helping us to be aware that everything in our life is a gift from God.” He describes Stewardship as a means for lifting the discussion of money to a spiritual level. It stresses motivation for giving, rather than methods.

The Church needs all the support it can get to carry out Christ’s mission. We cannot split the connection between faith and a generous heart. Stewardship: Grateful Disciples promotes a generous spirit of service and giving in the people of our Archdiocese through educational and motivational forums regarding our Christian duty to support our beloved Church with our prayer, participation, and generosity.

Evangelization and Stewardship go together. “Research is showing that a deeper sense of participation in Church life is the key to its vitality both spiritually and materially.” To bring this about, a new and more vibrant vision of the faith community (Clergy, religious, and laity) is required.” (Why Catholics Don’t Give Much)

The Stewardship Initiative is conducted over a four-week period and includes homily presentations by the pastor and selected parish leaders; and segmented, personalized letters to all registered households in the parish, designed to motivate parishioners to support their parish with prayer, participation, and generosity. This program will assist in sharing the principles of ownership, responsibility, accountability, and reward with your parishioners.

The Calendar of Activities for the Grateful Disciples Initiative is as follows:

Preparation
A good mailing list of registered parishioners is the lifeline of all parish communication efforts. Since mailings are made on a regular basis to parishioners at most parishes, it is assumed that the mailing list is relatively up-to-date. If it is not, the parish should take the time to make the parish list more accurate. In larger parishes a roster of names and addresses will become out-of-date rapidly. In many cases, approximately 25 percent of the names and addresses change annually. A parish should have a mechanism for correcting and updating its mailing list, such as “Address Service Requested” from the U.S. Post Office, which automatically forwards the mail to the new address while sending the parish the corrected address for a small charge.
While mailings will reach registered parishioners, many people attending Mass are not registered with their parish and therefore are not on the parish mailing list. The Grateful Disciples Initiative provides a wonderful opportunity to invite new parishioners to register. During the Grateful Disciples Initiative it would be helpful to have extra brochures and covenant cards (Week #3) in the pews or in the back of the church, and to announce from the pulpit that they are available for those who have not received a mailing to their home.

The most current research on direct mail indicates that the best response traditionally comes from a mailing that includes an outside mailing envelope, cover letter, and brochure. When addressing the envelopes, print addresses as close to the mailing date as possible so that the new parishioners who register during that period will receive the stewardship material and those who have moved will be deleted from the mailing. Trying to have the mailing look as personal as possible is a technique of successful direct mail.

In fact, every element of the mail campaign should have a personalized look about it, if possible, which means:
- The address should be printed on the envelope rather than on a label
- The letter should be individually addressed with a personal salutation
- A First Class stamp indicated personal attention

Mailing with attributes noted above have a greater chance of being opened and read. While it is not always possible to take all these steps, it should be understood that this is the best way to get the best response.

Once the mailing list has been updated, A letter from the pastor with accompanying brochure should be mailed to every parishioner 10 Days prior to Weekend #1.

First Week (Weekend #1)
A second personalized letter should be sent to every parishioner the Friday prior to Weekend #1 which re-states the homily message and makes a specific request for more involvement in the parish ministries and programs, and a request for increased, regular offertory support. The mailing is segmented for at least three different groups within the parish: a) faithful and generous contributors; b) more sporadic contributors; and c) the non-contributors. The letter will identify the participation and generosity of a given household over the past year. Samples of these letters are included in the appendix of this document.

The initiative is introduced on the first weekend with a homily / presentation by the pastor at all Masses. The presentation should begin recognizing that everything in life is a gift. The pastor should reflect upon the greatest blessings in life: family, friends and faith are foremost.

Gratitude is indispensable in life. A humble heart receives and then thanks. A proud heart, no matter how much he receives, would never be grateful. Our pride usually makes us think that we deserve more than we have.

The general remarks need to include both the importance of being grateful for everything (humility) and the dangers of not being grateful to God. Secondly, the pastor should speak briefly about the many ministries and programs of the parish and welcome all parishioners to help the parish by participating in these ministries and programs. These comments should highlight the impact that these ministries and programs make on the parish community. In addition, the pastor should motivate every parishioner to give back to God a part of the many blessings God has given them.
Finally, the pastor needs to firmly establish the link between their generosity in the Sunday collection and the parish ministries. It may seem elementary for anyone involved in parish programs, but the fact is that many of the parishioners are not conscious of the relationship between their contributions to the Sunday collection and the parish’s ability to continue its various programs and ministries. This link between offertory and ministry has to be made crystal clear.

While this presentation is not the place for a detailed examination or debate of the parish budget and should be more of a motivational talk, an overview of significant budget items can be included. It may also be helpful to place a list of the many ministries and programs the parish has to offer, and a summary of the parish budget in the bulletin (either as a separate sheet or discussed in the pastor’s weekly column). Having the list of ministries and programs, and the summary available at the time of the homily presentation may also be helpful.

Second Week (Weekend #2)
The Friday prior to Weekend #2, a third letter from the pastor should be sent which again makes reference to the needs that will be discussed during that weekend’s mass. Also, this letter will again make a specific request for increased, regular offertory support, and a more vivid participation in the parish’s ministries and programs. However, with this mailing every household will receive the same letter—this is not a segmented mailing. Again, a sample letter is included in the appendix.

Included with this letter is a copy of the Parish’s covenant cards. Samples of these covenant cards are included in the appendix of this document. Announcements in the parish bulletin remind everyone Covenant Sunday is in two weeks.

In the letter, the pastor will ask each registered family of the parish to review the offertory Planning Guide and determine a reasonable, regular, offertory contribution. The Parishioners are also told that there will be a collection of the covenant cards at Mass in two Sundays. If they are not going to be attending Mass at the parish that Sunday, parishioners are urged to mail or drop off the cards at the parish office.

During this weekend mass, The Pastor will introduce a lay witness or married couple and they give a short presentation on the parish ministries and programs. It is important for them to state the importance of these programs for the community and for the parish life. No one wants to support an organization that isn’t ministering well and serving its’s community. Thus, we begin this presentation by talking about what we (as a parish) are doing to help others. This should be a brief summary only a minute or so. It’s better to focus on just one or two ministries as examples of what the parish does rather than a “grocery list” of program titles. This talk should be an invitation to serve the church and to continue Christ’s mission.

If for some reason some parishioners don’t have the time to participate in one of the parish ministries or activities like Prayer Group or Eucharistic Adoration, these parishioners should still support the parish in other ways, such as with their personal prayer.

Third Week (Weekend #3)
During this weekend mass, The Pastor will introduce a lay witness or married couple and they give short presentations on the financial strengths and needs of the parish. Once the two parishioners are introduced, the presentation should begin with some personal observations about the vitality and strength of the parish. As stated before, No one wants to support an organization that isn’t ministering well and serving its’s community. Thus, we begin this presentation by talking about what we (as a parish) are doing to help others. This should be a brief summary only a minute or so.
The presentation then discusses the financial needs and goals of the parish. The speaker should be someone who is well known and knowledgeable about these needs and goals. He / She can be a member of the Parish Pastoral or Finance Councils, or a key ministry leader. The emphasis on this portion of the program needs to be on the parish’s desire to better serve its community. For example, “Our parish realizes that it needs several new youth ministry programs to help keep our young people active in their faith.” (or) “Our parish needs to have additional revenue for the maintenance and repair of our parish facilities. We have serious responsibility to keep these buildings in good shape, and we can’t manage that on the current, shoe-string budget.”

Parishioner’s reactions should be favorable, but some might say, “If they just wanted money from us, why didn’t they just ask for it?” or “Stewardship just means they want us to tithe 10 percent to the Church.” This is why a motivational message and speech about humility vs pride by the Pastor the first weekend, and a positive message by the speakers the second weekend are so important.

When this message is presented in a personal way by people who have already made a covenant to stewardship as a way of life, then parishioners will begin to understand that stewardship is not just a short-term effort but rather the foundation for greater faith and a more spiritual lifestyle. Through the letters, brochures, pastor’s homilies, and presentation by lay witnesses, the parish will begin to have a sense of the life-changing and life-enriching power of stewardship for them as individuals and the parish as a whole.

In addition, during this weekend’s Mass, the Pastor will thank all parishioners for their participation and support to the initiative. In addition, he will invite all parishioners to bring their completed cards next weekend Mass (Covenant Sunday). As stated before, it would be helpful to have extra covenant cards in the pews or in the back of the church, and to announce from the pulpit that they are available for those who have not received a mailing at their home.

**Fourth Week (Weekend #4—Covenant Sunday)**

All parishioners bring their completed cards to Mass on Covenant Sunday. At all Masses on Covenant Sunday, the Pastor delivers a stewardship homily and parishioners offer their covenant cards. **The rate of response will be increased greatly if extra covenant cards are in the pew this weekend.**

This is the week when the entire effort comes together. Parishioners are invited to make a personal covenant of giving a portion of their time, talent, and treasure in response to God’s blessings in their lives. There are several ways in which the stewardship covenant cards can be presented to the parish.

Listed below are three ways to present covenant cards to the parish:

- Invite parishioners to come forward at the offertory or another time during the mass, as if they were going to receive communion, to present their covenant cards in the form of a gift by leaving them in the sanctuary area.
- Ask the ushers to collect the cards during a special collection
- Ask Parishioners to present their cards with their offertory gift

Whatever method is used to present the covenant cards, it should be done with a spirit of gratitude, in keeping with the spiritual meaning of stewardship.
After the covenant cards are received, the pastor should invite those who have not signed and returned their cards to do so, by placing them in the offertory collection the following week or mailing them to the parish office. The pastor should also remind parishioners that their covenant of Prayer, Participation, and Generosity, if possible, begins right away. He should announce to the entire parish that ministry leaders will be contacting those who committed their participation to a specific ministry as soon as the data is compiled. The pastor should thank the parish family as a whole for their generous response to share their gifts.

**Follow-up:**
There are several follow-up activities that are important to maintain parishioners connected with life in the parish:

1. An after-Mass sign-up/drop-off covenant cards should be conducted for those parishioners who did not attend Mass or take part in the covenant activities on the previous weekend. This may need to be conducted on more than one weekend for larger parishes.
2. Thank you letters are to be sent to *all* who return covenant cards, regardless of amount committed or level of participation. This includes all of those parishioners that indicated no increase. We still have to thank them for taking part in the initiative.
3. Follow-up letters should be sent to all parish families who have yet to respond. This can also be done by telephone contact. This should be a gentle reminder that their decision is important to the parish.
4. As soon as possible after the campaign, a summary of the results should appear in the bulletin as well as being discussed from the pulpit. Documentation should include the anticipated increase in the offertory, number of families returning the covenant cards, number of parishioners participating in the parish ministries and programs, etc. Follow-up efforts will also need to be outlined.
5. Ministries leaders should contact volunteers as soon as possible. (First two weeks)

*A follow-up letter should be sent after three months to communicate the parishioners all progress made thank to their covenant in generosity, prayer, and participation.*
(Date)

Title, Name
Street Address
City, State, Zip

Dear (Parishioner Name):

Everything in life is a gift from God. When I reflect upon the greatest blessings in life, family, friends and faith are foremost. For what are you thankful?

Over the next several weeks you will have the opportunity to reflect upon the multitude blessings in your life. PARISH NAME will be engaging in Grateful Disciples, a Stewardship Awareness Initiative, four-weeks of education, prayer and reflection that will, ideally, help you to become cognizant of the many blessings in your life and the Giver of these blessings.

Spiritual growth and renewal are critical to our individual spiritual development and vital to the community life of our parish. Beginning this year we are seeking to embody the principles of stewardship and to actively promote stewardship in every family and individual of our parish. In becoming good stewards, we are thanking God for His many blessings by returning to Him a portion of the gifts He has given to us.

At each Mass this weekend you will be hearing more about Stewardship and what it means in terms of your personal spiritual lives. You will be asked to reflect upon the three areas of this program and how they are lived in your life:

- **Prayer**– How much time do you set aside each week in prayer and involvement in activities of spiritual growth?
- **Participation**– How are you using your talents for the betterment of our parish and our community? How much time do you set aside each week for volunteer activities to continue Christ’s mission?
- **Generosity**– How do you financially support our parish and other charities?

My hope is that these weeks of reflection will increase your awareness of God’s glory in the everyday, will strengthen your relationship with God and our Blessed Mother; will lead you to thank God for your profound abundance; and will encourage you to share your blessings. The enclosed brochure on stewardship discusses the real meaning of stewardship, and I ask you please to read it prayerfully.

Please pray for our parish so that we may, individually, hear God’s call and respond, “Here I am”

Yours in Christ,

Pastor’s Signature

(Pastor’s Name)
NOTE: Portions of this letter written in Bold Face type will have to be customized to fit your parish situation. Portions in parentheses will have to be customized on each individual letter.

Letter A—Consistent, Regular Parishioners (Donors)

(Date)

Title, Name
Street Address
City, State, Zip

Dear (Parishioner Name):

This past weekend, I spoke at all Masses and announced the participation of our parish in the Grateful Disciples Initiative. I shared with everyone how grateful I am for all your effort and covenant with God and our beloved Church. There is a wonderful spirit of cooperation here at Name of Parish that enables us to meet the challenges we face.

In last week’s letter, I invited you to reflect on the many blessings God has given to you and to renew your relationship with Him. I asked you to think about your prayer, participation, and generosity with God and His beloved Church.

- **Prayer**— Our most precious commodity. The demands of work, school, community, parish, and family can be overwhelming, but time spent visiting with God in prayer is vital to our spiritual development. God gave us this wonderful gift of prayer on earth. In spending time with God we have the opportunity to rethink our priorities and examine whether we are returning a portion of our life here on earth to God.

- **Participation**— God in all of His wonder and glory has given each of us talents that we are meant to use as part of His divine plan. From heart surgeons to social workers to artists to construction workers, God gave each of us special talents to share with our neighbors. Our parish needs us to use our talents so that God’s love and His Word can be shared. I sincerely hope you will share your talents with our parish by participating in one of our ministries or assisting at one of our events. A covenant of one hour per day, or even one hour per year makes a difference to the vitality of our parish life.

- **Generosity**— Your gift of treasure allows our parish to provide religious, educational, and social ministries. Our weekly Offertory collection is the primary source of our parish’s financial support. To be a good steward of treasure means committing a regular portion of your income to support our church and to do good deeds.

I know that you are a loyal and faith-filled parishioner of name of parish, and I am grateful for your support. As part of our program to educate our parishioners about the importance of the Sunday offertory and participation in our ministries and programs, we need all the support from our community, including your family. For this reason, I am asking every family of the parish to consider contributing to the offertory on a regular basis. Whether this means making a gift to the offertory on a weekly or monthly basis. We need your support, Christ needs your support and generosity, in order to expand our ministries and evangelize more people.

Because of the needs of our parish, and the cost of expanding our programs, I am hoping that you will be willing to look at your offertory giving and see how you might be able to help name of parish in the coming months. Please make a decision about your future support.

I realize any increase in your prayer, participation, and generosity involve both a sharing of your blessings and a sacrifice. I appeal to your generosity, and I will be grateful for whatever gift you decided is appropriate.

Sincerely in the Lord,

Pastor’s Signature
(Pastor’s Name)
(Date)

Title, Name
Street Address
City, State, Zip

Dear (Parishioner Name):

This past weekend, I spoke at all Masses and announced the participation of our parish in the Grateful Disciples Initiative. I shared with everyone how grateful I am for all your effort and covenant with God and our beloved Church. There is a wonderful spirit of cooperation here at Name of Parish that enables us to meet the challenges we face.

While my primary concern is the spiritual health of our parish and its ministries, I also have the final responsibility for our parish’s material and financial health. We are blessed with many generous parishioners and families who support our parish with their prayer, participation, and generosity. To insure we can continue with Christ’s mission by helping our community and families, regular financial support from all of our parish families is needed. The method we use for receiving this support is our Sunday offertory which is now available online as well. (Please see attached brochure) (Parish Giving)

I know that you are a loyal and faith-filled parishioner of name of parish. As part of our program to educate our parishioners about the importance of the Sunday offertory and participation in our ministries and programs, I am asking every family of the parish to consider contributing to the offertory on a regular basis. Whether this means that you make a gift to the offertory on a weekly or monthly basis is up to you. What I am asking is that you consider supporting our Beloved Church on a regular basis. We need your support, Christ needs your support and generosity, in order to expand our ministries and to continue to preach the Good Word to those in our community.

PSALM 41:1–3, GOD’S PROMISE TO THE GENEROUS

“Blessed is the one who considers the poor!
In the day of trouble the Lord delivers him;
the Lord protects him and keeps him alive;
he is called blessed in the land;
you do not give him up to the will of his enemies.
The Lord sustains him on his sickbed;
in his illness you restore him to full health.”

I have no way of knowing your current financial situation. Only you can make a determination about what level of offertory support that is most appropriate for your family. However, I do know that an increase in the overall parish offertory is necessary if we have any hope of expanding our ministries to meet the increased demand for services.

Because of the needs of our parish outreach, I am hoping that you will be willing to look at your offertory giving and see how you might be able to help name of parish in the coming months. Please make a decision about your future support. I realize any increase in your prayer, participation, and generosity involve both a sharing of your blessings and a sacrifice. I appeal to your generosity, and I will be grateful for whatever gift you decide is appropriate.

Sincerely in the Lord,

Pastor’s Signature
(Pastor’s Name)
Sample Cover Letter For Week 2 (Include Brochure)

Letter C — Non Donors

(Date)

Title, Name
Street Address
City, State, Zip

Dear (Parishioner Name):

This past weekend, I spoke at all Masses and announced the participation of our parish in the Grateful Disciples Initiative. I shared with everyone how grateful I am for all your effort and covenant with God and our beloved Church. There is a wonderful spirit of cooperation here at Name of Parish that enables us to meet the challenges we face.

While my primary concern is the spiritual health of our parish and its ministries, I also have the final responsibility for our parish’s upkeep and financial health. We are blessed with many generous parishioners and families who support our parish with their prayer, participation, and generosity.

To insure we can continue with Christ’s mission by helping our community and families, regular financial support from all of our parish families is needed. The method we use for receiving this support is our Sunday offertory which is now available online as well. (Please see attached brochure) (Parish Giving)

As part of our program to educate our parishioners about the importance of the Sunday offertory and participation in our ministries and programs, I am asking every family of the parish to consider contributing to the offertory on a regular basis. Whether this means that you make a gift to the offertory on a weekly or monthly basis is up to you. What I am asking is that you consider supporting our Beloved Church on a regular basis. We need your support, Christ needs your support and generosity, in order to expand our ministries and to continue to preach the Good Word to those in our community.

PSALM 41:1–3, GOD’S PROMISE TO THE GENEROUS

“Blessed is the one who considers the poor!
In the day of trouble the Lord delivers him;
the Lord protects him and keeps him alive;
he is called blessed in the land;
you do not give him up to the will of his enemies.
The Lord sustains him on his sickbed;
in his illness you restore him to full health.”

We are blessed with many generous parishioners who offer their prayer, time, talents, and financial resources for the good of our Beloved Church. However, to continue Christ’s mission we need your support as well. Our records show that your family is registered here at name of parish. If our parish is going to continue to serve the needs of our community, we will need your support. I encourage you to become more active with our parish, the doors are always open for you. Over the next several weeks, we will be discussing our ministries and programs. I invite you to learn more.

I realize that becoming an active parishioner will involve your time, talent and treasure. I hope to see you a Mass on Sunday.

Sincerely in the Lord,

Pastor’s Signature
(Pastor’s Name)
(Date)

Title, Name  
Street Address  
City, State, Zip

Dear (Parishioner Name):

For the past several weeks, we have been prayerfully thinking about being good stewards of the gifts God entrusted to us while we are on this earth. Next weekend is Covenant Sunday. You will be asked to renew your pledge to share a portion of the gifts God has given to you with your prayer, participation, and generosity.

You also will be asked to place your covenant cards in the **offertory collection** (or **place it on the altar**.) It will be a joyous day of renewal for all of us as we recommit ourselves to be good stewards of the gifts God has given to us. The enclosed brochure discusses the relationship between stewardship and our Christian life, and I hope you will take the time to read it prayerfully.

Please review the enclosed List of Stewardship Opportunities of Prayer and Participation; and commit yourself to those that best fit with your talents and time. You can write them in on the Covenant card. If you already are participating in one of our ministries, please list it.

Completing the Covenant Card should be a covenant between you and God. Consider a percentage of your annual income as your level of giving. You could give five percent of your income to the Parish and give another five percent to good works in the Archdiocese and your community.

For your spiritual growth and for the parish’s spiritual growth, it is important that we all embrace stewardship and commit a portion of our gifts as an act of love to help others and to spread the word of God. Please be generous, we need your covenant to continue building our community of faith.

Please know that you and your loved one are in my daily prayers.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor’s Signature  
(Pastor’s Name)
(Date)

Title, Name
Street Address
City, State, Zip

Dear (Parishioner Name):

I am most grateful for your generous response to our (first) parish Stewardship Initiative: *Grateful Disciples*. Thank you. I am confident the benefits of embracing a stewardship way of life will be a source of blessings for you and for our parish community. More than (number) households responded with covenant cards.

This is an excellent response to our (a first-time) initiative, but we will contact those who have not yet returned their covenant cards. It is encouraging to know how many of you committed a portion of your God given gifts of time and talent to our ministerial opportunities. Your name and contact information have been given to the coordinators of the ministries you selected. You should be hearing from them shortly and will hopefully be given the opportunity to become involved in your chosen ministries. If you are not contacted, please let me know!

*Thank you for your covenant to share your earthly treasure. Your financial gifts will help our parish to remain strong and to reach out to help those in need and to evangelize. I will remember you and your loved ones in my prayers as I thank God for the wonderful stewards in our parish. Please know that our Parish will be a good steward of your gifts to us.*

Again, thank you for your wonderful faith response to our *Grateful Disciples* Initiative. As we journey together in this life, I hope we may all come to know God better and to thank Him always for the gifts He has given us to share with others and to do His work while we are here.

Gratefully in the Lord,

Pastor’s Signature
(Pastor’s Name)

*Note: If a parishioner responds to time and talent only, eliminate paragraph three in the above letter.*
Timetable For Conducting the Grateful Disciples Initiative

To establish this calendar, establish the date of *Stewardship Covenant Sunday* then fill in the dates working backwards from this date.

| X-5 | Week of: Preparation: Update the list of registered parishioners. A parish should have a mechanism for correcting and updating its mailing list, such as “Address Service Requested” from the U.S. Post Office, which automatically forwards the mail to the new address. Remove the records of any mail that is returned unless there is a forwarding address. In that case, change the address. (Make this an ongoing project) The Archdiocese’s mailroom is able to help with this project. • Get witness speaker and volunteers to prepare all letters to be used during the initiative. • Separate Parishioners records by generous contributors, sporadic contributors, and non-contributors • Pastor finalizes the letters to be used in the mailings. |
| X-4 | Week of: A letter from the pastor with accompanying brochure should be mailed to every parishioner 10 days prior to Weekend #1. |
| X-3 | Week of: FIRST WEEK— Cover Letter For Week 2, and brochure should be mailed (Separate parishioners records by: a) generous contributors, b) sporadic contributors, c) non-contributors) the Friday prior to Weekend #1. WEEKEND #1— The Initiative is introduced with a homily presentation |
| X-2 | Week of: SECOND WEEK— Cover letter for Week 3 and the Covenant Cards are mailed the Friday prior to Weekend #2. WEEKEND #2— Lay witness or married couple is introduced by the pastor, and give a short presentation on the parish ministries and programs, inviting parishioners to give back to God part of their time and talent. |
| X-1 | Week of: WEEKEND #3— Lay witness or married couple is introduced by the pastor, and give a short presentation on the financial strengths and needs of the parish. In addition, the pastor will invite all parishioners to bring their completed covenant cards to next weekend mass. |
| X | Week of: WEEKEND #4— COVENANT SUNDAY. Covenant Cards are presented at mass. The letter from Cardinal Tobin should be shared with parishioners. |
| X+2 | Week of: A thank-you note or letter should be sent to each parishioner who completed and returned the covenant cards. Ministries leaders should contact volunteers as soon as possible. |
SURVEY (DRAFT)

1. What do you like best about this parish?
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

2. If you were provided training, would you be willing to volunteer for something that you may be qualified for yet you do not have much experience in? (i.e. Lector, usher, religious education instructor)
   a. Yes          b. No

3. Is your family registered in the parish?
   a. Yes          b. No

4. If no, are you registered in another parish?
   a. No          b. Yes (Parish Name) ________________________

5. If yes to #3, how long have you been a member of this parish?
   a. 0-2 years   b. 3-5 years   c. 6-10 years   d. 11-20 years   e. over 20 years

6. Which of the following are, or would be, most helpful to your prayer life? (Please circle all that apply.)
   a. Parish Mission (a week long parish renewal)
   b. Perpetual Eucharistic Adoration
   c. Adult Education
   d. Spiritual Formation
   e. Bible Study
   f. Prayer Group
   g. Rosary
   h. Mass
   i. Other:___________________________________
7. On what need or program should the parish most focus in the next one to three years?

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

8. Please rate each of the following aspects of the way Mass is celebrated:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Poor</th>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
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<td>4</td>
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Hospitality: ____
Ushers: ____
Lectors: ____
Music: ____
Homilies: ____
Offertory: ____
Prayerful Atmosphere: ____

9. Which of the following best describes how you really feel about tithing (percentage of giving) of treasure?

a. I follow the biblical concept of tithing by giving the “first fruits.” 10% of my gross income (8% to the parish and 2% to other charities).

b. Follow the biblical concept of tithing by giving the “first fruits.” 10% of my gross income (5% to the parish and 5% to other charities).

c. For me, tithing means giving a percentage of my gross income, but not 10%.

d. I take care of my personal bills and then give to the parish from what is leftover.

e. I make an occasional donation, but I do not give a percentage of my income.

f. I do not believe in giving money to the Church or charity.

g. Other _________________________________________________________________
10. If you do not believe in the biblical concept of tithing, why not? (circle as many as apply):
   a. Giving money to the parish does not result in any direct benefit to my family or me.
   b. The money given to the parish is not spent well.
   c. There are too many other things my money goes for. If I were to give a percentage of my gross income, I would not be able to support my present lifestyle.
   d. Too much of the money contributed does not stay in this parish.
   e. This parish is relatively well off. I prefer to give to more needy causes.
   f. Other ________________________________

11. What is your perception of our current parish financial status?
   a. We are generating enough revenue to pay our operating bills, including facility upkeep, and to put money aside in savings to meet future parish needs.
   b. We are generating the revenue to pay our operating bills, including facility upkeep, but do not put money aside for future parish needs.
   c. We are generating barely enough revenue to pay our operating bills.
   d. We are having difficulty paying our operating bills.

12. How are you informed about the parish finances, community outreach, and parish life? Circle all that apply.
   a. Weekly bulletin
   b. Annual financial report
   c. Conversations with other parishioners
   d. Not at all
   e. Other ________________________________
Optional Stewardship Prayers of the Faithful

1. For all of us, stewards of the Lord’s gifts, that we may always use them with gratitude and responsibility for the common good, we pray to the Lord...

2. For all of us who work in love, building the Kingdom of God, sharing our time and talents with our church and our community, we pray to the Lord...

3. That the call to stewardship may bring about in all of us a better use of our time and talents, we pray to the Lord...

4. That in response to the stewardship challenge all and each one of us may recognize, accept and share our resources, we pray to the Lord...

5. For all the members of our parish, who in response to our parish stewardship renewal, have pledged their time, talent and treasures, that the Lord may give them perseverance and reward their efforts with blessings, we pray to the Lord...

6. We pray that gifts that we offer at today’s Mass truly reflect our love and thanksgiving for the many blessings that God has entrusted us, we pray to the Lord...

7. That we have the courage to be good stewards of God’s many blessings, we pray to the Lord...

8. That we embrace our responsibility for caring for our parish and our community and so become shining examples of Christian faith, we pray to the Lord...

9. That we will constantly remember all we have comes from our God and as good stewards, we will use the gifts of time, talent and treasure that we have been given to us in order to build up the Kingdom of God, we pray to the Lord...

10.
GRATEFUL DISCIPLE COVENANT CARD 2017-18

Name of Parish

NAME: ___________________________ SPouse NAME: ___________________________

ADDRESS: ___________________________ ___________________________

HOME PHONE: ___________________________ WORK PHONE: ___________________________

CELL PHONE: ___________________________ EMAIL: ___________________________

I hereby, in gratitude to God from whom I received what I am and have, pledge the sharing of the following part of my time, talent and treasure as my response to the Covenant Jesus established.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WANT TO JOIN MARK WITH “X”</th>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>ALREADY A MEMBER MARK WITH “X”</th>
<th>WANT TO JOIN MARK WITH “X”</th>
<th>TALENT</th>
<th>ALREADY A MEMBER MARK WITH “X”</th>
<th>TREASURE</th>
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<td>ROSARY SOCIETY (OC)</td>
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<td>LEGIÓN DE MARÍA (GC-Sp)</td>
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<td>CÍRCULO DE ORACIÓN (GC-Sp)</td>
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<td>CURSILLO DE CRISTIANIDAD (GC-Sp)</td>
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<td>SANTO NOMBRE (GC-Men-Sp)</td>
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<td>DAMAS DE LA CARIDAD (GC-Women-Sp)</td>
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<td>HUAS DE MARÍA (GC-Girls-Sp)</td>
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<td>YOUTH GROUP (13-15 years)</td>
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<td>ORACIÓN POR LOS ENFERMOS (IC-Sp)</td>
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<td>COM. NEocatecumenal (Sp)</td>
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<td>O.L. OF QUINCHE (IC-Sp)</td>
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The Biblical rule for our stewardship in treasure is the tithe, the first 10% of our income. Half of it goes to the parish, (50% of weekly income or 2 hours of work) and rest to charity. We need to pray to have the courage to give our tithing, because our giving should be planned (2 Cor 9:7), proportional to the Income (2 Cor 8:12) and sacrificial, since Jesus praised only the donation of the widow that gave of “what had to live on” (Lc 21,1-4).

My weekly tithing in the Sunday Church collection in this year will be $ __________

☐ I am interested in knowing how to make a contribution to the parish in stocks, properties or in my last will.

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<tr>
<th>WANT TO JOIN MARK WITH “X”</th>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>ALREADY A MEMBER MARK WITH “X”</th>
<th>WANT TO JOIN MARK WITH “X”</th>
<th>TALENT</th>
<th>ALREADY A MEMBER MARK WITH “X”</th>
<th>TREASURE</th>
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<tr>
<td>PARISH CLEANING TEAM (IC)</td>
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<td>MAINTENANCE (carpenter, electricity…)</td>
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<td>SECRETARY SUPPORT</td>
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<tr>
<td>FUNDRAISING / SOCIAL ACTIVITIES</td>
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<td>YOUTH GROUP HELPER</td>
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<td>CATECHIST OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION</td>
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<td>EVANGELIZATION &amp; WELCOMING</td>
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<td>SOCIAL HELP</td>
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<td>PRO-LIFE MINISTRY</td>
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<td>ALTAR SERVER (adult, youth or child)</td>
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<td>USHERS (loan or adult)</td>
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<td>CHOIR (loan or adult)</td>
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<td>LECTORS (loan or adult)</td>
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<tr>
<td>MIN. DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION</td>
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<td>SPECIAL ABILITIES I CAN OFFER:</td>
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DISCIPULOS AGRADECIDOS - TARJETA DE ALIANZA 2017-18

Nombre de la Parroquia

NOMBRE: ___________________________ NOMBRE CONVUISTE: ___________________________

DIRECCION: ____________________________________________ ____________________________________________

TELF. CASA: ___________________________ TELF. TRABAJO: ___________________________

NUMERO SOBRE: ___________________________

CELULAR: ___________________________ EMAIL: ___________________________

Yo, por la presente, en agradecimiento a Dios de quien he recibido cuanto soy y tengo, ofrezco la siguiente parte de mi tiempo, talento y tesoro como mi respuesta a la Alianza que Jesucristo estableció.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUIERO SER MARÍO MARÍO</th>
<th>TIEMPO</th>
<th>YA SOY MARÍO MARÍO USTED “X”</th>
<th>QUIERO SER MARÍO MARÍO</th>
<th>TALENTO</th>
<th>YA SOY MARÍO MARÍO USTED “X”</th>
<th>TESORO</th>
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<tr>
<td>SOCIEDAD ROSARIO (IC-inglés)</td>
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<td>CLUB DE JUBILADOS (IC-incluído)</td>
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<td>LEGIÓN DE MARÍA (IC)</td>
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<td>CURSILLO DE CRISTIANIDAD (GC-Sp)</td>
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<td>SANTO NOMBRE (IC-Hombres)</td>
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<td>DAMAS DE LA CARIDAD (IC-Mujeres)</td>
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<td>HUAS DE MARÍA (Mujeres)</td>
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<td>GRUPO DE JÓVENES (13-18 años)</td>
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<td>ORACIÓN POR LOS ENFERMOS (IC)</td>
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<td>NA. SEÑORA DEL QUINCHE (IC)</td>
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La norma Bíblica de la administración de nuestro Tesoro es el diezmo, el primer 10% de los ingresos. La mitad (50% del ingreso semanal o 2 horas de trabajo) va a la parroquia, el resto para caridad. Pero para tener el valor de darle un diezmo, porque que la donación debe ser planeada (2 Cor 9:7), proporcionada a los Ingresos (2 Cor 8:12) y sacrificial, va que Jesús solo alabó la ofrenda de la viuda que dio de “lo que tenía para vivir” (Lc 21,1-4).

Mi diezmo de cada semana en la coleta de las Misa de este año será $ __________

☐ Estoy interesado en saber cómo hacer una contribución a la parroquia en acciones de Bolsa, propiedades o en mi testamento.