



Stewardship 2021

“The Greatest of These is Love”

Jesus often spoke of love and showed compassion. He taught us by his example to love one another and to be compassionate to those in need. For example see the following verses from scripture:

“When Jesus went out, He saw a large crowd, *he had compassion* on them and healed their sick” (Matthew 14:14).

“Jesus *had compassion* on them and touched their eyes. Immediately they received their sight and followed him” (Matthew 20:34).

“...*he had compassion* on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd” (Mark 6:34).

Compassion can often mean kindness and sympathy yet in the verses quoted above it refers to something much deeper and more powerful. The phrase “he had compassion” is translated from the Greek word: ἐπλαγχνίσθη which is from root word: σπλάγχνα, which means, “innards/guts.” In other words, this type of *compassion* is felt in a deep physical manner. Compassion experienced in this way compels us to respond with love, deep concern *and* involvement.

This same word is found in the parable of the Good Samaritan:

“But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him *he had compassion* on him” (Luke 10:33).

This parable challenges and inspires us to live compassionately, in a manner where another person's suffering becomes our own suffering. When we embody this type of love, when we become fully engaged, it changes the way in which we live and care for others and for our community. This type of compassion allows us to serve one another *in* love.

The same love that Saint Paul describes to the Christians at Corinth when he says, "...the greatest of these is love" (1 Corinthians 13:13). He is stating that we must have compassion for others. The type of love and compassion that is expressed in our offerings of money and support (that is not prideful or seeking something in return) is a love that is categorized by its kindness, gentleness and hope; one that is eternal, complete and fulfilling. This type of love is an expression of stewardship.

Stewardship is everything that we do after we say: "I believe." Stewardship is about how we live our lives and make choices. Stewardship is about love *and* love is about stewardship.

Love and stewardship are inseparable. They are our response to the gift of God's love and blessing in our life. We are called to carry this gift forward with the love and compassion that we show for others – and by doing so, we honor the gifts that God has so freely offered to us.

By living in this manner – we, and our parishes can be transformed – and become true beacons of Christian agape. We are all called to unite. To care for each other, support one another, face challenges together and continue to serve our neighbors; to embody Christ's compassion and love as a parish family.

We are called to be compassionate stewards, placing the needs of others before our own. Scripture is filled with passages of God's call for

us to be generous, loving, and compassionate givers. Saint Paul speaks of God's call for us to "excel in the grace of giving" (2 Corinthians 8:7). We are 'hard-wired' to live as members of the Body of Christ and serve our larger community with compassion and love.

The *priority* of compassionate stewardship is not to pay the bills. It is about how we, as a community of faith, can do God's work with love and compassion. It is less about the parish's need to receive, and more about our need to give. It is our generosity with the gifts and blessings God has entrusted to us. Compassionate stewardship is an attitude and a way of life.



Every Portion Matters

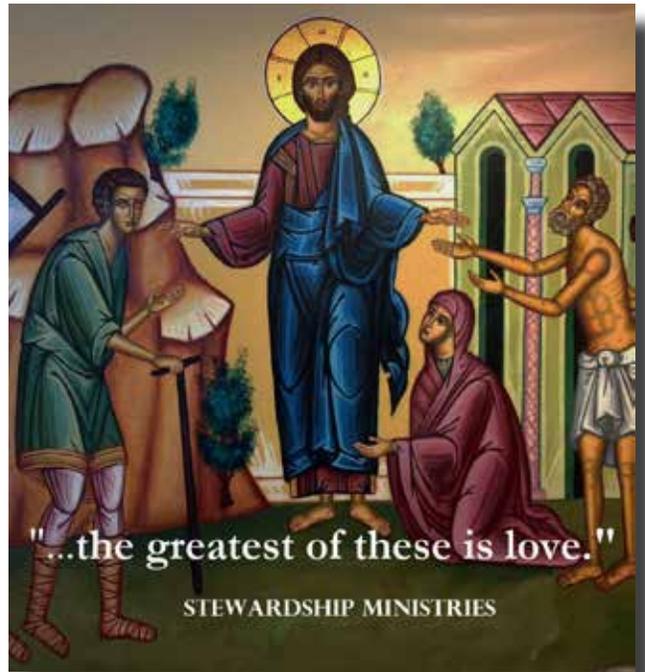
Once upon a time, a festival was to be held in a certain village. To ensure there would be enough wine for the celebration, each member of the village agreed to pour one bottle of his best wine into a large cask. "If I fill my bottle with water," reasoned one villager, "the dilution will be so slight, who will notice?" But when the feast and time for merrymaking commenced, and the cask was tapped, nothing but water poured forth. Every member in the village had reasoned alike: "My portion will not be missed!"

The Greatest of these is Love

1 Corinthians 13:13

Saint Barbara Greek Orthodox Church

480 Racebrook Road Orange, Connecticut 06477



My Commitment of Treasures - For Christ and the Ministries of His Church

Yes! I want to support God's work through my Church of Saint Barbara. Here is my Commitment of Faith for 2021 representing my best efforts to return to God a portion of that which belongs to Him.

Name: (please print) _____

This represents my individual stewardship commitment for 2021

I pledge to give: ___\$250/month ___\$200/month ___\$150/month ___\$100/month
 ___\$75/month ___\$50/month ___\$25/week ___\$20/week
 ___\$1,200/year (The National Average per couple) \$___more/other

I will make my donations:

 ___ weekly ___ monthly ___ quarterly ___ yearly

Υπόσχομαι να προσφέρω:

 ___\$250/μήνα ___\$200/μήνα ___\$150/μήνα ___\$100/μήνα
 ___\$75/μήνα ___\$50/μήνα ___\$25/βδομάδα ___\$20/βδομάδα
 ___\$1,200/χρόνο (Ο Μέσος Όρος) \$___περισσότερο/άλλο

Θα εκπληρώσω τη δωρεά μου:

 ___εβδομαδιαίως ___μηνιαία ___τριμηνιαία ___ετήσια

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Payment Options:

I will mail or bring my monthly stewardship contribution directly to the Church Office.

I will pay my stewardship contribution by credit card online through the Church's web site at **<http://www.saintbarbara.org/stewardship>**.

Note: This is a promise of intentions. It can be changed at any time by contacting the Priest or Stewardship Chairperson.

Please complete this form and return it in the enclosed confidential envelope within 30 days



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