

## **Stewardship Tips for Virtual Ministry – Q's and A's**

### **Q: Who may have access to donor information in a parish?**

A: The definitive statement from the diocese can be found on the diocesan website under the Churchwarden's Toolbox Tab. There is a file called "Parish Leader's Manual." On page 36 there is half a page devoted to this topic. In summary:

As a separate charitable entity, each parish should develop its own policy regarding privacy and alert donors and members of the congregation to that policy. The Privacy Standards of the Diocese can be found here: <https://www.toronto.anglican.ca/parish-administration/privacy>.

If the envelope secretary were to anonymize the data and provide the Churchwardens with a set of data that could not be traced back to specific donors, then analysis could be done in this way without being limited by the vestry's privacy policy. One must always make sure that any data set or data point that is published or used, would not be able to be traced back to a specific individual.

"There is nothing that happens in the parish that should not be seen or know by the Incumbent."

### **Q: What is an appropriate standard for giving?**

A: The key is to be proportional, sacrificial, and planned in our decision-making. Only through thoughtful prayer and discussion among family members can a household determine what level is appropriate for them. It is helpful to have some sort of clarity about a standard of giving. Those who are being introduced to joyful giving for the first time might consider donating one hour's pay per week to church and a similar amount to charity.

Those who are retired can be encouraged to consider an hour's pay (2.5%) from their retirement income. For those who are unemployed or in serious financial difficulties it is recommended that they consider how they might give of their time and talent to the church on a weekly basis and regularly pray for the ministry of the church. Everyone, regardless of income level, should be encouraged to give something.

### **Q: What is First Fruits Giving and why is it so advantageous to the church?**

A: First Fruits Giving is a simple way to make regular offerings to your parish through either your chequing account or credit card. It represents a very deliberate and planned approach to annual giving and ensures that your parish receives the funds it needs to support ongoing ministry even when you might be absent from church.

The Diocese of Toronto encourages parishes to use the Pre-Authorized Remittance program operated through the United Church of Canada. For more information call (416) 231-5931 x3050 or visit [www.united-church.ca/par](http://www.united-church.ca/par)

### **Q: How can we maximize participation in PAR?**

A: The greatest obstacle to giving is fear. So why not try a little test, a 90-day test. In Malachi 3:10, God invites people to "test Him" in the matter of giving. Therefore, we encourage people to

try a 90-day test. After making a proportionate commitment of perhaps 2%, challenge each giver to set aside half (1%) to give through PAR and the other half (1%) through regular envelope giving. This will have the immediate impact of providing a sense of security for wardens and treasurers because they know right off the top what the minimum giving will be, and the incumbent will probably sleep better as well. Watch and see how God works in your life. If you regret the decision, then discontinue the test. However, if you experience a deeper relationship with God by giving of your first fruits, joyfully commit the full amount through PAR.

**Q: Should I give from my net or gross salary?**

A: Pray and ask God what to do. If God prompts you to give from the gross amount, go ahead and do this, trusting God with the results. If you are uneasy about this, begin giving from the net amount for a few months and see what happens. After a few months, if you experience God's creative care in your life, then begin to give from your gross income.

**Q: What is text-2-give, tap-2-give and e-transfer?**

A: These types of vehicles represent the next generation of giving technology that is primarily focused on the use of smartphones. They reflect a convenience of usage and efficiency that is growing in popularity. First developed to capitalize on the giving preference of Millennials, smartphone usage is now ubiquitous. More and more, parishes are adopting these forms of giving to complement traditional vehicles like envelopes and PAR.

These vehicles can be effectively paired with live stream technology for their simplicity and convenience. There are two potential drawbacks: start-up and transactional fees can be prohibitive to parishes that do not have a significant donor base and gift sizes tend to be smaller.

**Q: How might we introduce giving during our livestream?**

A: Livestreaming is a new adventure for the church. In a very short period, parishes across the diocese have adapted to our quarantined reality with worship on Sunday, bible studies, virtual coffee hours and other social encounters. If we don't adopt and invitation to generosity to our livestream, we are missing out on an opportunity to provide a comprehensive understanding of Christian discipleship to those who are permanently housebound or those are seeking to understand the Anglican traditional. Parishes can adopt tasteful strategies for requesting gifts of treasure during the service, including:

- using a footer at the bottom of the screen indicating ways to give now (this should be done only periodically during the service to avoid being a distraction)
- pausing after the Prayers of the People to invite reflections on what we are grateful for and to direct giving on-line or with their smartphone
- including a musical interlude for a few minutes to allow for giving
- a virtual "passing of the plate" with commentary on why giving is important
- using the order of service and email to prompt giving at a specific time

There are useless links on the diocesan website ([www.toronto.anglica.ca](http://www.toronto.anglica.ca)) that parishes can access to find out more information on how to introduce livestreaming in their own parish.

**Q: What is CanadaHelps?**

A: CanadaHelps is a registered charity dedicated to increasing charitable giving across Canada. They do that by serving both donors and charities. ... they process donations made using their site, disburse the funds to the charities and provide instant or anytime access tax receipts directly to the donors.

Each Canadian charity has a template at CanadaHelps that can be customized to the needs of your church. I encourage you to do so. As an example, the Diocese of Toronto page looks like this: [www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/incorporated-synod-of-the-diocese-of-toronto](http://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/incorporated-synod-of-the-diocese-of-toronto).

Donors can give one-time gifts, monthly or gifts of securities. As you customize your site, you can authorize Canada Helps to make automated Etransfers to your bank account to provide more efficient processing. Canada Helps will issue the tax receipt but you have access to donor information. Visit [www.canadahelps.org](http://www.canadahelps.org) to claim, customize your parish page and set up and link to your web page.

**Q: What is plently and tithe.ly?**

A: Both companies provide “second generation” giving suites that offer a variety of giving vehicles with heavy emphasis on the use of smartphone. Plently ([www.plently.com](http://www.plently.com)) places heavy emphasis on using QR codes while tithe.ly ([www.get.tithe.ly](http://www.get.tithe.ly)) emphasizes text giving. Currently the diocese is exploring how we might implement these new technologies in our own giving practice. We will share our insights when we have piloted these vehicles.

**Q: How is FaithWorks managing during these challenging times?**

A: Front-line workers at All Saints Church Community Centre, Flemingdon Park Ministry, Samaritan House in Barrie, One Roof Community Centre in Peterborough and others continue to provide necessary outreach to the most vulnerable in our community. We are continuing our fundraising efforts via messaging through Constant Contact, the FaithLines newsletter and direct mail.

We have an added incentive this year to press on. Thanks to the generosity of a committed member of the church, every new or increased donation will be matched – dollar for dollar – up to \$100,000. We will continue to encourage generosity across the diocese to help support our vital outreach ministries. Please visit our website, [www.faithworks.ca](http://www.faithworks.ca) to make an on-line gift and see how our ministries are having an impact today.