

Catholic Courier Church Finance Edition

Items of Parish Income

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Things within a pew listed in the family name. Rates were according to a fair portion of parish expense. To rent a sitting is to register not just as a parishioner but to register as a parishioner who recognizes a just obligation. Not to rent a sitting is to sidestep a definite part of your personal obligation on parish support.

Sunday Pewrent or Seat Offering should be paid when one does not pay quarterly pewrent. Families should have a definite sitting; young people should not leave it all to their parents, but should make a Weekly Seat Offering of at least a dime.

School Support is expected from parishioners, because the school is a definite work of the parish, maintained and conducted in the name of and for the parishioners. It is, therefore, a responsibility resting on all the parishioners, entailing a personal obligation on each individual. Some have their own children in the school, some have had their children registered in their earlier years; some are alumni of the parish school or of some other parish school; some look forward to the day when their little ones will be entered; some have no children registered, have not attended a parochial school; but all feel a natural responsibility for the school and its work, because they are Catholics, because they are parishioners. All support the public schools whether their children attend or not; the public schools can not serve our children because they omit a most important essential of education, the knowledge of God and the services of God. Our parochial schools offer the complete training that is founded on God, centered around God, sees in God its beginning and its end. The only interest in our Catholic schools that is worth while, is the interest that expresses itself in giving them regular support.

Special Collections make up part of the income of those parishes which are not run on a budget. Those on a budget unite all parish expense, and get the people to pledge a definite amount each Sunday which will cover all items. Most parishes depend on special collections to meet part of their expenses: a Coat or Fuel Collection, a Debt Collection, a Monthly Collection, a Building Fund Collection.

What Should One Give?

The blessings of the Parish Church are given without stint to all who are parishioners, and as a matter of justice, the parish is bound to minister to all its members without question. The parochial Mass is said every Sunday and Holyday and on suppressed feasts also for the spiritual and temporal welfare of every parishioner. A share in the merits of all the spiritual works done by the parish goes out to its members. Priests are at hand to give instruction and advice to the grown-ups, to care for the sick, to hear the confessions of the people and to arrange services at such times as will serve their convenience. Regular religious instruction of the children in the parish school, and of grammar and high school pupils riot in our parish schools, is an obligation of the priests. Care of the funerals of deceased parishioners is a duty of the Pastor. Arrangements for wedding, for christenings, for First Holy Communion and the Confirmation, fall to his lot.

All receive of the parish church according to their needs. What should one give in support of the parish church?

Should the support we give be measured by what we actually receive? Or should it be measured by our power to give? In civil life, all agree on the general principle that a man should be taxed for the common good in accordance with his financial status; his income, his real estate holdings, his wealth or lack of it. The benefits of city and State and Federal administration are for all, to be used according to need; the expense is on all according to individual ability to pay.

Thoughtful Catholics will see that the same rule should apply to their support of religion, to their contributions to the parish church. On a small salary a young married man may find it hard to give \$50.00 annually to his church; when his salary improves, he will not feel reluctant to share with religion the improvement in his income.

All will agree that there should be a proper proportion between income and Church contributions. With a start made on a right basis, this should mean in every parish a respectable number of \$1.00 contribu-

tions on Sundays with a ready elevation of the contribution to a higher mark when income permits. To hold back, to keep giving on a lower level than finances would warrant, to give only as much as one fellow-parishioner whose income is very low and whose current expense at home takes a far greater part of that income than our own home expense, is not to do what our better nature would suggest. Surplus income should promote contributions above those made by men whose income is too small to leave any surplus.

\$1.00 is a reasonable contribution from a man on an ordinary income; it gives a dignity and a meaning to the Sunday envelope. A larger amount is equally reasonable from one whose income is above that of the ordinary man.

The decision rests with the individual. It should be reached only after that individual has put himself into the presence of God, has considered all that God has given him, all that God intends to give Him, what God has a right to expect from him.

Why Should One Give?

In all good deeds the motive is important? What should be our motive in supporting religion, in contributing to our parish church?

The motive should be two-fold: first, we give to please God; second, we give to enable His Church to do its work.

To enable His Church to do its work? God has made the functioning of His Church dependent on us. His Priesthood is ready to minister to all, His Mass is awaiting celebration, His sacraments are available for the faithful, His teaching awaits us from the lips of His authorized representatives.

But, before His Priesthood can function, before His Mass can be celebrated, before His sacraments can be given or His teachings fall from the lips of the preacher, God looks to all His faithful children for essential help. He looks to us for the churches and schools, He looks to us to make ready His altar, He looks to us to keep his home in our parish church swept and garnished and prepared in a worthy manner for His dwelling among us. Our purpose in giving is to enable Him to live and work among us.

But beneath this purpose of our giving, is the more fundamental one of pleasing God. In thought and in word we praise Him, in prayer and devotion we appear before Him. But we know He looks for more than prayer, more than mere words; He looks for action, generosity, sacrifice on our part. We can not expect to come before Him with empty hands. Therefore, we make our own each Sunday the Offertory of the Mass: we give our weekly contribution with a supernatural thought in mind. We unite our offering with the offering of that of the priest at the altar, and in union with the particular text from Holy Scripture that occurs in the Mass of the Sunday.

"Pro Nostra totiusque mundi Salute"—says the priest at the offertory: "for our salvation and that of all the world." To the offering of the Eucharistic elements, we add our offering of the material contribution needed to make that salvation available to us and all the world.

Help Your Parish Treasurer!

Your Pastor is the Spiritual Leader of the flock; he is also the Treasurer of the parish. One might well judge the duties of spiritual administration would be a sufficient burden for your Pastor without adding the difficulties of financial management.

However, in the United States, custom has dictated and the law requires that the Pastor shall be the Treasurer of the church corporation. His duties are many, his responsibilities cover many items, he must care for everything that concerns the material part of parish management.

As Treasurer, he represents and works for every parishioner! For you and for each of you he strives to make income cover expenses. It is a hard job, and often a cheerless one, but you hear no complaint from him. It is his job, and he is determined to do the best he can in meeting its duties.

What a help you can be to him! What assistance you can give him in meeting the calls made on him as Parish Treasurer! When you tell him that you want to shoulder at least your part of the responsibility he carries for the parish! That you are not asking him to "make bricks without straw." That you know he can not pay 100% of parish expense if you give him only 95%. That your consideration of parish needs will be such as to enable you to give enough to meet your full part of them.

Show your Treasurer that you want to give intelligently and adequately with realization of what your yearly contribution must do in furnishing your reasonable share of parish support.

Sunday Envelopes

Many parishes use envelopes for the Sunday Collection. A year's supply is furnished in your Set for 1942. The Set contains an envelope for every Sunday in the New Year, usually for every Holyday, and at times an envelope for each of the several Special Collections.

Use of the Envelope Sets helps the Pastor, helps the Parish, helps the people. It helps the Pastor because it brings to him the designated offering of each parishioner, properly identified by the name or number on the envelope. He is able to enter on his books just what the individual is giving; he can rely on a definite weekly amount from each parishioner; he does not have to fear loss of needed parish income through an occasional absence of a parishioner. It gives him a comforting knowledge of the practical interest in parish financing evinced by the regular arrival each week of the parishioner's envelope.

It helps the parish, because it puts parish income on an orderly basis. The parish benefits by the thought that the envelope-user gives to the weekly contribution he encloses. That thought covers the year, covers every need of the parish, promotes the setting by the parishioner of a yearly amount that will be adequate. Without the envelope, too often the parishioner even with the best intention will find himself confronted with the box on Sunday when he has no proper bill or coin at hand and when he has to drop in whatever comes to his hand. Much better for the church when he has fixed up his envelope on Saturday evening with an offering that will really do the work it is intended for, that will guarantee the parish decent support. The element of surprise is out when envelopes are used: each offering is a prepared one.

It helps the parishioner, because it puts into giving the dignity it should have. Not a hit-and-miss affair, not a thoughtless and purposeless tossing of a coin or two into the basket, not a transient and passing dropping of a nondescript offering, is the weekly contributor of the envelope-user.

Rather it is the dignified, high motivated, dedicated, act of one who knows his standing as a Catholic, as a living member of God's Church, as one upon whom Christ is depending for the welfare of His religion within the parish. With the taking of the new Set for 1942, the parishioner thinks over what his parish church needs from him, what he can justly and reasonably afford to give in accordance with his income and in proportion to what his fellow-parishioners of varied income are giving. He then divides the amount over fifty Sundays, sets his weekly amount, and finds in the Envelope Set a valuable weekly reminder of his duty of giving that amount. It is a benefit to him in other ways: It helps him to realize that his Pastor knows what he is doing toward parish support; it encourages him to have the feeling that he is listed on the parish books as a worthy member of the parish, a steady supporter of all its activities.

Use the Envelope Set For 1942

Give your Pastor this encouragement. Follow his suggestion that all use the Envelope Sets. He has a hearty responsibility, which you can lighten by your use of the envelopes.

There may be better systems, many other plans that have their respective merits. The point for consideration here is that the envelope plan has been chosen.

Some say they give more without using the envelopes. This is true in some few cases. It is not true in the majority of cases. Experience gives definite testimony on this. Users of envelopes do give an average offering on Sunday that is definitely larger than the average offering of those who do not use envelopes.

Your use of the envelopes will, therefore, help raise the amount of the Sunday income of your parish. It will help your parish, help your Pastor, help you!

Special Collections

For Extra-Parochial Purposes
We belong to the Church Universal. The CATHOLIC Church. Our parish church is no independent organization, founded by the whim or caprice of a group of people, to live for itself and to do nothing for others.

Our parish church is a unit in one of the grandest organizations on

earth, the Church of Jesus Christ. It was founded by authority of a Bishop of the Church, who used in its erection the same power given by Christ to His Apostles. It is directed by a Pastor trained in our diocesan Seminary, ordained by our Bishop, appointed according to the Canon Law of the Church as Pastor with definite powers and obligations.

No parish can live merely unto itself, for itself. It must live always unto Jesus Christ, as an individual part of the great Church which He founded to teach ALL nations. It has obligations to itself, obligations to the Bishop and the diocese, obligations to the Catholic institutions in and out of the diocese, obligations to the Church in the State, the Nation, and to the Church Universal. It has just and abiding claims on the Bishop, the diocese, the province, the Church in the Nation and the Church in the world at large.

These mutual obligations and rights involve a financial duty on the part of the parish. Special Collections are needed each year for the Holy Father, the Seminaries, the School System, the Catholic University, the Holy Land, the Needs of the Diocese, the administrative Board in New York State and in the United States. Besides the annual collections, particular needs call at times for an extraordinary collection. Some of these annual and extraordinary collections are mentioned in other articles in this number.

Diocese of Rochester

To the support of The Diocese of Rochester, we contribute through the Diocesan Needs Collection.

For the maintenance of the diocesan office, the upkeep of diocesan properties, the meeting of diocesan bills for taxes, interest, salaries, etc. the Most Reverend Bishop comes to us once in each year for funds. The Diocese of Rochester is a corporation erected under the authority of the State of New York, empowered to carry on the work of a religious society. Seven Trustees with the Most Reverend Bishop as President administer the affairs of the corporation. All the parishes deal with The Diocese of Rochester through the Chancery Office. It represents the parishes and does work in their name in legal matters that concern national, state and municipal legislation. It is the vehicle through which the Most Reverend Bishop oversees the financial affairs of each parish. It maintains the central diocesan office through which all parish collections for general church purposes are handled, to which all applications concerning the spiritual welfare of priest and people are sent for attention. Every pastor is called upon to seek the help of the Chancery Office frequently in the course of his parish affairs.

The maintenance of the diocesan office is one item of expense that presents itself regularly for attention. Besides the upkeep of the building, the payment of insurance premiums, the bill for heat and light and telephone service, there is the budget for salaries for those who care for the business of the office. The diocese furnishes the home for the Bishop just as the parish furnishes the home for the pastor; the support of the episcopal residence is part of the diocesan expense budget. The diocese also owns several of our newly erected chapels maintained for missionary purposes. Where the income from collections and other sources is not sufficient to support these chapels, the deficit is made up by The Diocese of Rochester. Occasion arises from time to time to purchase property to be used at a later period as a site for a new church; the financing of these purchases falls on The Diocese. Certain levies made on the diocese as a whole for national and general Church purposes form part of the annual budget of diocesan expense. Missionary work among our poorer people is also carried on by the Diocese, which maintains a staff of workers for this purpose.

The parish looks to its people for support of its manifold activities; the Diocese must also look to its people for financial backing. The parish goes directly to its parishioners through the appeals made at the Sunday Masses; the Diocese chooses to approach its members through the medium of the parish, asking the pastor to present its needs once each year and to secure from his congregation an amount sufficiently large to represent the fair share of that parish in the diocesan expense budget.

With the deep interest parishioners feel for the great work Bishop Kearney is carrying on in the diocese, and the hearty cooperation they have given to him in his varied activities, we feel confident that the answer to this appeal for DIOCESAN NEEDS will be such as to express anew the love and devotion of a faithful people for their Spiritual Father. Assist YOUR BISHOP in the important and

exacting work of administering The Diocese of Rochester.

For Bishop Kearney's Annual Diocesan Budget

The welfare of religion rests with Bishop Kearney and with his people. The diocese cares for all the parishes, their schools, churches, laity and clergy.

Bishop Kearney serves all diocesan in every Churchly activity. One annual collection will give Bishop Kearney your NEEDED SUPPORT.

The Diocese serves ALL—ALL—should support the diocese. The parish cares for the local unit, the individual congregation.

The parish through its clergy ministers to all God's Word and Grace. The Pastor serves all parishioners in manifold parish activities.

Support of your parish is given in your regular Sunday Offering.

The Parish serves ALL—ALL—should support the parish.

All who are Catholics share in the graces of Religion; all who are good Catholics share in its support!

Thoughtful Catholics give according to a right standard—measuring their gift to the current income and present need.

Careless Catholics give without thought of either need or income; hindering more than helping by ungenerous proffered mites.

Conscienceless Catholics take all, give nothing—making support of Religion harder for those that care.

To help Bishop Kearney do his work as Bishop of Rochester—He is doing God's work for us! What can we do for him?

We can help him do God's work! How? How?

By our gift to Diocesan Needs Collection!

Suggested offerings \$20.00 — \$15.00 — \$10.00 — \$5.00 — \$3.00 — \$2.00.

St. Bernard's Seminary and St. Andrew's Seminary train our priests—Their support comes from you and your fellow-parishioners—Our gift must supply one year's support for both these fine schools.

To raise its quota our parish will require generous gifts—\$50.00 — \$25.00 — \$15.00 — \$10.00 — from those able to give it—\$5.00 from those in limited circumstances \$2.00 from small wage earners.

Our privilege to share in the support of our seminaries—Our joy to have an important part in preparing students—For the Priesthood of Jesus Christ, for service in pulpit and altar.

Our opportunity to become benefactors of the seminaries—By our sustained interest and by our prayers for these schools—By our contribution to the Seminary Collection each year.

Our portion to return to God some of the goods He has given us—Our reward to have for our souls in life and after death—The prayers of the student body each day in their seminary chapel.

Our chance to have our dead enlisted under the gift we make in their name—To give a worthy donation in memory of father or mother deceased—Or to give God a place in our Last Will by a legacy to St. Bernard's.

To Support Our Seminaries for 12 Months

Why I Give?

Because I am a Catholic—A member of Christ's Church—A sharer in the blessings—That come from His Priesthood—

Because I love the Priesthood—Want to see it grow—Yearn to help young men follow—Their God-given vocation—

Because I want now and in death—A share in their daily prayers—For myself and for my parents—For all that are dear to me—

Because I know the harvest—Is great, the laborers few—And I want the Lord to send—Laborers into His harvest—

Because I know God's future—Blessings on the world will come—Through the ministry of the priests—My gift will help to train—

What I Give?
An amount that will fit the need—Of our seminaries for 12 months—That will meet my part of the—Amount asked of my parish—

An amount based on my income—Not the \$2.00 minimum, unless—Mine is a minimum income, too small, For a larger offering—

\$50.00 a worthy Seminary Gift—\$25.00 a proper contribution—\$15.00 a 12 months' gift—\$10.00 a praiseworthy donation—

\$5.00 an ordinary amount—\$3.00 an appreciated gift—\$2.00 the minimum outlay—Lesser gifts from the children—

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