



ST. AUGUSTINE of CANTERBURY

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To my St. Augustine's church family,

It is once again time for our annual stewardship campaign. When we talk about stewardship we are always referring to how we spend our time, talent, and treasure. The three are inextricably linked. God asks us for all three, because if not, we will simply be more generous with that which we value least, or the one that we feel we have in abundance.

I remember when Laura and I got married, I had just started seminary and on the first day they took us into a room and said that on average we would graduate with \$35,000 in debt from our time in seminary. Right then and there I decided that wouldn't be me, although truth be told, I had probably already made that decision, I just didn't have those numbers in front of me.

During that time we would go to this little scratch and dent grocery store where stuff cost 10% of what it would at WalMart. Sometimes the flour would have worms, but we kept going back. When the cars would break down I would sometimes spend days out in the driveway repairing those vehicles. I was dropping and rebuilding motors and transmissions right in the driveway. The reason for these things was that we had little money, or thought we did, and didn't value my time nearly as much. Today, that has flipped flopped. I value my time much more than money, and I would not dream of dropping a transmission in the driveway. Back then tithing was a little bit more uncomfortable than it is today, but I am much more guarded about my time and energy than I was back then. Maybe I am getting old and lazy, or maybe we all go through times in our lives where we value different gifts more than others. Wherever you are in that journey, God wants you to be generous with all your gifts. God wants to set us free, but we can never experience the freedom he intends for our lives if we are holding back some portion of ourselves. If there is some area that we say is too precious to share, even with God, then we are captives to that thing whatever it is.

"Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not regretfully or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." 2 Corinthians 9:7

Being a cheerful giver means giving from the heart. Sharing the abundance that we have freely received as a testament to our thankfulness and a testament to our love and faith in God. I hope you will join me in supporting our parish. Not to keep the lights on, but to do our part to spread the Gospel to a world in need. Thank you and God bless.

Sincerely,

Wes