

From the desk of Fr. Matthew (Continued)

Your Life Changing Commitment

Once you make the conscious choice to abandon the system of dues and embrace True Stewardship, your life will experience change. This change comes about by putting priority on giving to God in abundance rather than giving to God out of inadequacy. Giving to God in abundance is different for each one of us. Jesus tells us in the Gospel of St. Luke, "For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required." If the Lord has blessed you and your family with abundance, then your Stewardship should be reflective of this abundance. If, however, you and your family are having financial struggles, then an appropriate offering to God based on this will also be rewarded. Jesus tells us this in the Gospel of St. Luke chapter 21: "And He looked up and saw the rich putting their gifts into the treasury, and He saw also a certain poor widow putting in two mites. So He said, 'Truly I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all; for all these out of their abundance have put in offerings for God, but she out of her poverty put in all the livelihood that she had'" (21:1-4).

Our Parish's Need for True Stewardship

Here at St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church in Wilmington, North Carolina, we are in need of a system of True Stewardship. Currently, we have 134 pledging individuals and families for a total offering of \$152,387. Our operating budget is \$182,584. We have collected \$121,975. **This means that we are \$60,000 short for the 2009 fiscal year.** Here are some more of our current stewardship statistics:

- 58 out of 134 pledges are \$500 or less
- 43 out of 134 pledges are \$1,000 or less
This equals to 101 out of 134 pledges; 75% of all of our pledges.
- 18 out of 134 pledges are \$2,000 or less
- 8 out of 134 pledges are \$5,000 or less
- 7 out of 134 pledges are \$12,000 or less

Conclusion

My brothers and sisters in Christ, if we all make a conscious effort to adopt True Stewardship, we will see a lot of good things happening in our Church. The most important element in a successful stewardship campaign is YOU!

2010 Stewardship Cards will be mailed to every family this month. **Please return all stewardship cards on or before Sunday, November 15.** We will offer them to God with a prayer before the Holy Altar during the Divine Liturgy. It is vitally important to the planning of our ministry programs that you adhere to this deadline and offer to God your Free-Will, Sacrificial Offering of Your First Fruits to Jesus Christ and His Holy Church.

Come and See what the Church can become!