

### *Celebrating Theophany Every Day*

The Feast of Christ's Theophany (or Epiphany) is celebrated with great solemnity in the Byzantine Church. The word "theophany" means a divine "manifestation" or "revealing." Jesus of Nazareth - a carpenter - was revealed on the banks of the Jordan River to be the Son of God and the long-awaited Messiah - the "Christ." A voice came from the heavens that said, "This is My beloved Son, My favor rests on Him." (Matthew 3: 17)

Let us imagine ourselves standing on the banks of the River Jordan. We are witnessing the baptism of Jesus at the hands of Saint John the Baptist and the revelation of Jesus as God in the flesh. What a privilege that would have been!

Yet, God is revealed to us each and every

day. God manifests Himself to us not just on the banks of the River Jordan but at the bus stop, the grocery store, and in the work place. His image is within each of us. He is in our co-workers, our spouses, our children - even in our enemies.

The real challenge of Christian discipleship is to endeavor to see the image of Christ in all people and to allow them to see that same Godly image within us. The celebration of the Great Feast of Theophany is not a one-day occasion commemorating an event that took place some two thousand years ago. Rather, it is living, day-to-day, the conviction that God is within each human being, and that each human being ought to be treated as though he or she is the living image of Christ.

## SUNDAY BEFORE THE THEOPHANY/EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD



*Icon of the Theophany of Our Lord -- January 6th*

# **ST. GEORGE ROMANIAN CATHOLIC CATHEDRAL**

EPARCHY OF ST. GEORGE IN CANTON

1123 44<sup>TH</sup> St NE, Canton, OH 44714

Website: stgeorgeoh.org

Tel: 330-492-8413 FAX: 330-493-9963

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**Most Rev. John Michael Botean, Bishop - 330-493-9355**

**Very Rev. Ovidiu Marginean, Rector - 330-492-8413**

**Very Rev. Iuliu Muntean - 330-493-9355**

**Fr. Deacon Remus Orian – 330-809-2500**

**Schedule for Holy Days of Obligation:** Vigil Vespers: 6:30 p.m.

**Day of Feast:** 10:00am and 6:30 p.m.

**Confessions: See calendar or at any time by request.**

**Ann Fosnaught, Secretary 330-492-8413 or annf@rcdcanton.org**

## **January 3, 2021**

### **Sunday before Theophany**

**This Sunday: Epistle 2 Tim 4:5-8**

**Gospel Mark 1:1-8**

Next Sunday: Epistle Eph. 4: 7-13

Gospel Matt 4:12-17

### **Weekly Liturgy Schedule**

Monday 1/4

No Divine Liturgy

**Tuesday 1/5**

**9:00am Royal Hours**

**Tuesday 1/5**

**6:30pm Vespers with Divine Liturgy and Blessing of Water**

**Wednesday 1/6**

**10:00am Divine Liturgy: Holy Day – Theophany**

Thursday 1/7

8:30am Divine Liturgy: +Mark Hampu and blessings on his parents by Rose and Veronica Maier

Friday 1/8

8:30am Divine Liturgy: Walsh and Baumgartner Families by Constance McAdams

Saturday 1/9

No Divine Liturgy

**Sunday 1/10**

**10:00am Divine Liturgy**

*Church Bulletin donated in January 2021 by ...*

All scheduled services will be held and can be viewed and prayed with at <https://stgeorge.click2stream.com/>. Make sure to click on the volume to unmute at the bottom right hand corner. Also, we are every Sunday on St. George Cathedral Facebook.

Coffee hour will take place in the Large Hall and is donated by St. George Cathedral Thank you!

**Christmas Collection: December 25, 2020**

Loose	\$20.00
Sunday envelopes	\$1,810.00
Martyr Bishops Collection – Clergy Retirement Fund	\$25.00
Christmas	\$3,060.00
Candles	<u>\$99.00</u>
Total	\$5,014.00

**Sunday Collection: December 27, 2020**

Loose	\$10.00
Sunday envelopes	\$825.00
Christmas	\$810.00
Candles	<u>\$6.00</u>
Total	\$1,651.00

Someone lit a candle and prayed for you last Sunday:

In memory of all Zagan Family Members	The Zagan Family
+Husband Dan Cseak	Natalie Cseak
+All family members and angel +Trisha	Del and Sandy
H/S All family members	Del and Sandy
Special Intention for Family	Doru Jacobs
Health and Salvation	Mihai and Elena Florea
In memory of loved ones	Mihai and Elena Florea
Special Intention for Family	Mihai and Elena Florea
H/S Melanica; Kevin	Maria Marcu
H/S Maria, Marcel and Matthew	Maria Marcu

H/S Family  
+Mary Ardelean  
+ Aurelia and Alexandru Vintila and Family  
+Eugenia and Octavian Greavu and Family  
+John Bikis Jr.  
+Emil Neagu  
+Mary Ardelean  
+All deceased family members  
H/S All living family members  
H/S Rita Cristea and Family  
H/S Stella, Johnny and Adrian Lazar and Family  
+Aurelia Unger, 29 years  
+Charles and Mary Ardelean  
+Andrew and +Teresa Misbrenner  
+John and +Anna Letz  
+All Martyrs of the Ukrainian and Romanian Greek Catholic Churches  
H/S Martin and Elizabeth Misbrenner  
H/S Stefan and Lisa Woods  
H/S Fr. David Misbrenner  
H/S Cathy Beck, sister  
+Grandparents and +Godparents  
H/S Ardelean Family  
+Mary, mother  
H/S Our Parishioners  
+Msgr. Capros

Ileana Hotiu  
Amelia and Mark Botean  
Nic and Marcela Greavu  
Nic and Marcela Greavu  
Greg and Cheti Bikis  
Greg and Cheti Bikis  
Greg and Cheti Bikis  
Greg and Cheti Bikis  
Greg and Cheti Bikis  
Mircea Cristea  
Mircea Cristea  
  
Maria Poplacean  
Maria Poplacean  
Fr. David Misbrenner  
Fr. David Misbrenner  
Fr. David Misbrenner  
  
Fr. David Misbrenner  
Fr. David Misbrenner  
Fr. David Misbrenner  
Bob and Nancy Maciag  
Erik Ardelean  
Erik Ardelean  
Danny and Cyndi Ardelean  
Danny and Cyndi Ardelean  
Danny and Cyndi Ardelean

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### **Special Announcement:**

**Please pray for:** Bryan Pryce, John Contini, Donna Pandullo, Missy Lawver, Carol Hoge, Veronica Maier, Sr. Agnes Scalero, Earl Adkins, End to Corona

Virus attack, Clore Family, Liviu and Georgeta Barcutian, Grace Mary Fein, Barbara Greavu, Connie McAdams, Suzie Dragos, Doris Rotar, Virginia Rogers, Stella Lazar and all who need our prayers.

**Sick and homebound:** Amelia Botean (Home), Magdalene Florian (Florida), Alex and Theresa Gonyias (Home), Ann Stimer (Home), Maria Poplacean (Canton Regency Rm.#256), Aurelia Lupsor (Canton Christian Home) Natalie Cseak (St. Joseph, Louisville), Eugene Popa (St. Joseph, Louisville) and Irene Pontones (Chapel Hill Retirement Community)

**For holy Baptism** contact the parish office at least one month prior to the date requested.

**For First Reconciliation** contact the parish office when your child turns 7.

**For Weddings** contact the parish office at least six months prior to the date requested.

**To guarantee announcements for the bulletin**, they need to be given to the office by Wednesday prior to the Sunday bulletin. Thank you!

To facilitate **accurate counting**, please use separate checks/cash for the special collection, candle and Sunday collection envelopes. Thank you for your attention to this detail!

Please let the office know if you have an upcoming surgery, illness, etc., so we can put you on our prayer list. Thank you!

**Altar Candelabrum** for January 2021 is donated by **John Puia in memory of deceased family.**

**Left Iconostasis Candelabrum** for January 2021 is donated by **Tony and Terry Orlando in memory of +Emil Neago.**

**Right Iconostasis Candelabrum** for January 2021 is donated by **Chuck Roska Family.**

**Blessed Virgin Mary Candelabrum** for January 2021 is donated by **the Oprean Family.**

If you would like to sponsor candelabra for any month of the year in honor of a living member or in memory of any loved ones that have passed away, please

get in touch with the Church office and Ann will be able to schedule it for you. Thank you for your continuous support of the Church!!!

**Prescura for January 2021:** Amparo Adkins, Suzie Dragos, Elena Florea, Ann Fosnaught, Maria Marcu, Debbie Murari, Jacqui Oprean, Virginia Rogers, Patricia Wendt, Dodi Zbuka and Psa. Gabriela Marginean.

## **Announcements**

At the end of 2020, I want to **thank** all who participated in the liturgy whether in person or online, supported the church financially during the pandemic and being available to help with fundraising and events! Special thanks to Rick Bollon for being available to make delicious coffee for our social time.  
*Fr. Ovi*

**+Carol Hoge** peacefully passed away on December 22 listening to *colinda* by the choir. Fr. Ovi prayed with her and the family over Zoom on the previous day. May her memory be eternal!

**Prescura money is due for 2021.** \$30 for the year can be paid to P-sa. Gabi. Thank you for your support of this ministry!

**Sunday envelopes for 2021** are now available. Thank you for your commitment to our parish! St. George Cathedral **calendars** are ready for pick up as well!

We put in the bulletin a **request for stories about Christmas** – Nancy would have been the person to give the stories to, so she can put them all together – to include with our Christmas mailing. I would like to do this project, still, but let's plan this one for next year. So, to jump start our next year project – if you want – please write down what meant Christmas for you **this year**, and then, we can put all these stories together for our next Christmas!

**Use Amazon Smile and choose St. George Cathedral.** Amazon donates a percentage of your purchases to the charity of your choice when you go to <https://smile.amazon.com/>. As you are shopping online, you can go to choose the St. George Cathedral. Thank you!

## **Ladies Auxiliary:**

Dues are \$10 for the coming year. You may send your dues to the church or give to Carol Popa. Check made out to Sf. Maria Ladies Auxiliary.

## **Parish events:**

Because of the pandemic, Fr. Ovi will pray the **home blessings** for those who sign up. Call the office or sign up in the narthex if you would like him to come to your home between January 7 and 30, 2021.

**Christmas colinda / caroling** can be found at

<https://www.stgeorgeoh.org/> or at <https://youtu.be/2qoFpWqTE3E>.

## **To Tickle Your Funny Bone ☺**

The church baritone soloist was delighted when one of the members spoke to him after service and said, “You have a very mellow voice.”

When he got home, he went directly to his dictionary and discovered the meaning of “mellow”. He read, “Mellow: over ripe and almost rotten.”

## **Word of Life**

“Through the Incarnation and birth of Christ, God reveals to us the dignity of all human life. Human life, as a gift of God, is sacred and inviolable. The Son of God has united himself with every human being and desires for us to share eternal life with him... Each of us is made in the image and likeness of God, and we reflect his glory in the world.” *USCCB Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities “The Gospel of Life: A Brief Summary”*

May friends and families of women with difficult pregnancies provide loving, life-affirming support for both mother and child;

Let us pray to the Lord, Lord have mercy.

## **Happy Birthday! La mulți ani!!**

Patricia Shaheen – January 3<sup>rd</sup>

Tonya Parker – January 7<sup>th</sup>

Jennifer Miller – January 7<sup>th</sup>

Adriana Coprean – January 8<sup>th</sup>



	Mon 1/4	Tue 1/5	Wed 1/6	Thu 1/7	Fri 1/8	Sat 1/9	Sun 1/10
	Dispensation (Hârți) Forefeast of Synaxis of the 70	Royal Hours Strict fast and Vigil of Theophany.	Dispensation (Hârți) +THEOPHANY Abstinence	St. Nicetas of Tonya Parker's Jennifer Miller's +Synaxis of St. John	Adriana Coprean's Ven. Mother Abstinence	Polyeuctus, martyr.	Matthew Valentine's Aurora Xelores's Holy Fathers Gregory, Sunday after the
9am		Royal Hours 9am - 11am		Liturgy: +Mark Hampu and blessings on his parents by Rose and Veronica	Liturgy: Walsh and Baumgartner Families by Constance Mcadams		
10am			Liturgy: Holy Day of obligation - Theophany of Our Lord- Botezul Domnului (Boboteaza)				Divine Liturgy 10am - 11:30am
11am							Coffee: 11:30am - 12:30pm
12pm							
1pm							
2pm							
3pm							
4pm							
5pm							
6pm							
7pm		Vespers with Divine Liturgy and Blessing of the water 6:30pm - 8pm					



CHRISTMAS EVE AND NEW YEAR'S EVE are holiday milestones in American society. In our tradition January 5, Theophany Eve, is also a special day of preparation and anticipation leading into one of the most important festivals of the Church year.

Like Christmas Eve, Theophany Eve is a *paramony*, a day of continual prayer and fasting, leading up to the celebration of the feast. Part of what makes this a day of continual prayer is the celebration of the *Royal Hours* which replaces the ordinary First, Third, Sixth and Ninth Hours served every day in Byzantine practice. The Divine Liturgy is not served until the end of the fasting day, when it is joined to vespers to begin the feast.

The Royal Hours are served on the Paramony of Christmas, the Paramony of the Theophany and on Great and Holy Friday which we might call the "Paramony of Pascha." In addition, some Greek Churches serve the Royal Hours on the Eve of Pentecost, but without fasting.

Our cycle of daily services has its origin in the experience of the Jews during the Babylonian exile. Since the prescribed round of morning and evening sacrifices could only be conducted in the Jerusalem temple, the exiled Jews developed a cycle of prayers, hymns and Scripture readings to be said throughout the day instead. When the Jews returned to Jerusalem after the exile, these prayers were incorporated into the usage of the temple. Jews today observe three daily services (morning, afternoon and evening) corresponding to the times of the three daily temple sacrifices.

The first Christians continued the custom of praying at these specific times. The Acts of the Apostles records St Peter going apart to pray at the sixth hour (Acts 10:9) and at the ninth hour (Acts 3:1). With the development of monasticism these daily prayers took on the character of formal services. Other services were added in imitation of the Psalmist's witness, "*Seven times a day I praise You, because of Your righteous judgments*" (Ps 119:164).

The hours came to commemorate important events which the Scriptures say took place at those times. Thus our Third Hour recalls the descent of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost (see Acts 2). The Byzantine Sixth and Ninth Hours evoke the memory of Christ's crucifixion and death: "*Now from the sixth hour until the ninth hour there was darkness over all the land. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice ... and yielded up His spirit*" (Mt 27:45, 50).

### **What Makes These Hours "Royal"?**

While for most of the year the Hours are "cell services" – without choral responses or accompanying ritual, meant to be served by monastics in their cells (or by anyone at work or at home), the Royal Hours are served solemnly in church with hymns, Scripture readings and ceremony. They are generally served without interruption and conclude with the Typika. The name "Royal Hours" comes from the practice of the Great Church in Constantinople. The emperor and his court would attend the Hours on these days, emphasizing their importance in the life of the Church.

### **Scripture in the Royal Hours**

As a rule, the Scriptures read at the Hours are all taken from the Psalms. In the Royal Hours, however, selections from both the Old and New Testaments are read, in addition to the Psalter. The New Testament selections recount the ministry of John and the baptism of Christ as well as the meaning of baptism in the Church. The Old Testament readings, all taken from the Book of Isaiah the Prophet, provide us with an illustration of how Old Testament prophecies are ultimately fulfilled in Christ.

The Prophet Isaiah lived in the eighth century BC and, like other prophets, called on his hearers to repent and to conform their lives to God's way. The following passage, read at the Third Royal Hour, illustrates Isaiah's message: "*Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean; remove the evil of your doings from before my eyes; cease to do evil, learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression; defend the fatherless, plead for the widow*" (Is 1:16-17).

Isaiah warned that, if people did not repent, the nation would suffer at the hands of its enemies (at that time, the Assyrians). If they did repent, however, they would be restored and given new life. We see this in the selection read at the Sixth Royal Hour, "*With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation. And you will say in that day: Give thanks to the Lord, call upon His Name; make known His deeds among the nations, proclaim that His Name is exalted. Sing praises to the Lord, for He has done gloriously; let this be known in all the earth. Shout, and sing for joy, O inhabitant of Zion, for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel*" (Is 12:3-6).

The second half of the book, added some 200 years later, reflects the same themes. At this point in Israel's history their great enemy was Babylon rather than Assyria. The Babylonians would conquer Jerusalem and destroy the temple, dragging the most prominent Jews into exile.

### **Streams in the Desert**

The promise for their restoration dominates the second half of Isaiah. Jerusalem, no longer desolate, will be rebuilt and will water its thirsty people. At the First Royal Hour we read, *“The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom like the lily. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon... Behold, your God will come.... He will come and save you. ... For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water”* (Is 35:1-7).

The power of Babylon ended just as that of Assyria had centuries before, but the ultimate fulfillment of these prophecies would only come with Christ. We see in Him the Source of eternal life, the One who truly turns the arid wilderness of thirsty hearts into springs of water. This theme would be taken up in the Gospel of John, where we read the words of the Lord Jesus *“If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water. But this He spoke concerning the*

*Spirit, whom those who believe in Him would receive”* (Jn 7:37-38).

The frequent mention of water in these passages, then, does not just allude to the Lord's baptism in the Jordan but to the Lord Himself. He is the One who can refresh with the living water of the Holy Spirit all who come to Him. He is the One who is revealed at the Jordan by the Father's voice and the Spirit's hidden presence and who begins to announce the good news of our salvation to the world.

**When he saw the Lord of glory draw near to him, the Forerunner cried out: “Behold the One who redeems the world from corruption! Behold the One who delivers us from affliction! Behold the One who, in His mercy, has come forth upon earth from a pure Virgin, granting remission of sins! Instead of servants, He makes us children of God. Instead of darkness, He gives light to mankind through the waters of His divine baptism. Come, let us glorify Him together with the Father and the Holy Spirit.”**

*Idiomelon at the Ninth Royal Hour*

### *Sunday before the Theophany*



# **Behold the Redeemer of the World**

ST GEORGE PASTORAL COUNCIL  
MINUTES OF December 17, 2020

Pastoral Council was called to order at 6:30pm with an opening prayer by Father Ovidu Marginean.

Members present: Fr. Ovi, Vice Chair Dave Gallagher, who conducted the meeting in the absence of Chairman Johnnie Maier; Fr. Deacon Remus Orian, Carol Popa, Denny Popa, Tony Orlando, Tim Reichel, Debbie Murari, and Jacqueline Oprean.

Also in attendance from the Stewardship Committee was Emil Alecusan.

COMMITEES

Youth Club: Debbie Murari advised Emily Stoffer and the kids sent out Christmas cards to many of the shut-ins.

Choir: No report.

Cantors: No report.

Altar Boys: Fr. Ovi he was just working to keep the alter boys organized.

Religious Education: No report.

Adult Catechism: No report.

Gift Shop: No report.

SOCIAL JUSTICE

Transportation of Those in Need: No report.

FELLOWSHIP: No report.

Senior Citizens: No report.

Ladies Auxiliary:

Debbie Murari indicated they have been working on the Christmas poinsettias. Debbie also indicated Nancy Maciag and the Ladies Auxiliary were putting together nice plaques, with a poem, to give to shut-ins for Christmas.

Carpathian's Men's Group: No report.

Parish Picnic: No report.

OLD BUSINESS

Giving Tree:

Replacing the Giving Tree this year was a food drive for the Stark County Hunger Taskforce. On December 16, 2020, the collected food gifts were delivered to the taskforce's office on 9<sup>th</sup> Street SW in Canton. These donations almost filled the bed of a pickup truck, and they were greatly appreciated by the taskforce.

Heritage Festival I Festival Booklet: No report

New Year's Eve: No report

Fish Fries:

- † Fr. Ovi explained that due to the ongoing pandemic, the 2021 Fish Fry will be structured very much like the Church's other drive-by dinners. Fr. Ovi explained that at this time he was expecting that there would only be six (6) fish fries, with the first starting on February 15<sup>th</sup>, and none prior to Lent.
- † Tony Orlando questioned if the Men's Club was going to try and do their raffle during the fish fries this year. The general consensus was, no, as there was no safe way to carry it out.
- † Jackie Oprean mentioned that she belongs to groups that have done some successful online raffles. She suggested this be done, not for the Men's Club, but for the Church.

After a lengthy discussion, the consensus was that raffle tickets could be added to the fish fry website menu. Comments were that this would be a win-win for the church.

- † Fr. Deacon Remus, Tony Orlando, and Denny Popa were tasked with determining the feasibility of an online raffle and reporting back to council during its January 2021 meetin.

### Colinda

- † Fr. Ovi indicated that due to the ongoing pandemic, there would not be a traditional Colinda. However, Fr. Ovi stated that he, Fr. Iuliu, Fr. Deacon Remus, and Subdeacon Viorel made a recording of them singing some tradition Romanian Christmas songs. These recordings are in the process of being completed.
- † Fr. Ovi also suggested, along with their songs, that we would make available one of the Parish choir's CD.
- † Fr. Ovi said the details of how to make this available (via our website, Facebook page...) were still being worked out.

### Parish General Meeting

- † Fr. Ovi mentioned that he felt it was important to have a Parish General Meeting in shape of fashion. Potentially during a Coffee Hour after church.
- † Several Council members expressed concern regarding a larger group gathering during this pandemic time.
- † There was a suggestion that it be streamed from the Church's website. Fr. Ovi indicated this might be possible, but the meeting needed to be accessible only to parishioners. How to do this is yet unknown.
- † Further discussion of the General Meeting was then tabled until the January 2021 Council meeting.

### NEW BUSINESS

- † Fr. Ovi advised that he was able to speak to Magdalen Florian in Florida, and he asked that we keep Magdalen in our prayers.
- † Fr. Ovi stated he would be visiting shut-ins during the week on December 21<sup>st</sup>.
- † The next meeting of Pastoral Council is scheduled for January 21, 2021.

The meeting was closed with prayer by Fr. Ovi. Council adjourned at approximately 7:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Dave Gallagher, Vice Chair

# Stewardship

**S**tewardship is both an old and new concept. In the Old Testament, the concept of stewardship is based on man's willingness to recognize God as the provider of all essential elements of life. Then, as people received their harvest or an increase in their herd, they gave God the first fruits of that which they brought in from the fields or vineyards and the first fruits of the increase of the herds. By bringing these tithes and offerings to the storehouse, the religious system was supported. The Levitical group was able to lead in worship and administer the affairs of the law. This kept the nation on an even keel.

The New Testament concept is based upon the idea of grace and not law. The motivation for giving is the love that people have for their Lord and his Kingdom's work. People are to give from their heart because of the change that had occurred in their lives.

There is a great similarity between the old and new concepts of stewardship as they are presented in God's Word. Notice what the Bible says:

**Who is to give?** The Old Testament book of Malachi says "Ye." The New Testament proclaims "Everyone of you" (I Corinthians 16:2).

**What is to be given?** Malachi 3:8,10 states, "Tithes and offerings." Paul says in I Corinthians 16:2, "As God has prospered you."

**When are we to give?** "When the storehouse is open to receive the tithes and offerings," says the writer in Malachi 3:8-10. Paul makes it even more plain. He says, "Upon the first day of

the week..." (I Corinthians 16:2).


**Where are we to give?** The instruction of the Old Testament is "into the storehouse." I Corinthians 16:2 tells us, "In store."



**Why are we to give?** The Old Testament (Malachi 3:10) explains the reason as being to supply the needs; so that there would always be a sufficient amount in the storehouse. The New Testament (I Corinthians 16:2) states it plainly, "...that there be no gatherings when I come."

God's financial plan has been in force for more than 3,500 years. It has worked in every generation whenever and wherever people have practiced it. It has never been too demanding or restrictive. When practiced by God's people, it has provided for the work that needed to be done and God has blessed those who followed his plan.

### Something Old ... Something New

God's plan is both. It has worked and continues to work today. 

*This is a new year: 2021. When you resolve to make the changes in your life that have been nagging at you, don't forget our responsibilities as stewards of God's gifts. This is our chance to renew our efforts to share the grace bestowed upon us.*



## All is Given to Us!

### God gives me shelter.

Not just any shelter, but a house with a sound roof and inside there is furniture and pictures on the walls. There is heat, air conditioning and a television.

### God gives me food.

Not just food to sustain life, but a rich variety of delicious dishes, and marvelous tools with which to prepare them.

### God gives me clothing.

Not just a covering for my body, but beautiful things with many different textures and bright colors.

### God gives me friends.

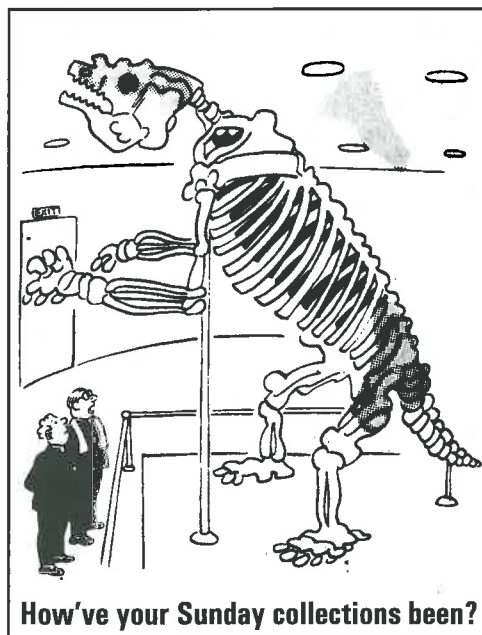
Not just acquaintances, but people who care about me.

### God also gave his only son so that I might be eternally happy.

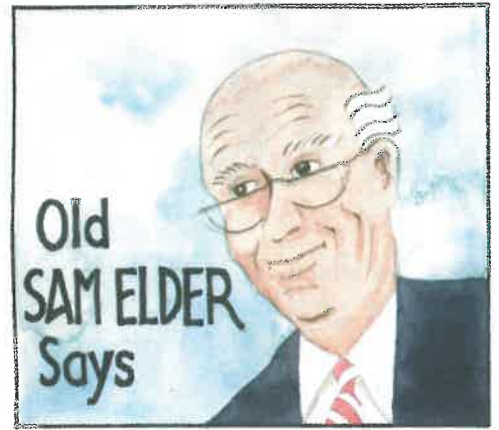
All that is asked in return is that you love God, have faith in God and that you share God's Word.



*God has given you a gift, a charisma. A charisma isn't something you earn. It's a gift entrusted to you for the sake of the whole community, including your church. The only question is whether you will put it at the service of the community or not. Pray that you will grow in your understanding of stewardship of your talents and abilities.*



**How've your Sunday collections been?**



Old Sam Elder remarked to Pastor Don Goodly, "I have concluded that the rich and poor have something in common. Take Bob Rich, he has repeatedly risked his inheritance on questionable investments, hoping to make a killing. Conventional investments are too mundane! With his expensive lifestyle, he wants to make a quick fortune so he can retire handsomely. Bob is always thinking of money and looking for that fabulous deal. Bob also loses a lot of sleep."

"On the other hand, Paul Poor is fighting the battle of minimums. In our community, you can't find a rent for less than the minimum. Food tends to cost a certain minimum per week. Old shabby clothing and shoes eventually wear out. Paul lives in "genteel poverty" without enough income to live adequately; yet, too well off to receive assistance. A health crisis or an accident could mean bankruptcy or going on welfare. Paul dreams of how just a few extra dollars would ensure his paying his way.

Pastor Goodly asked, "What can they have in common? They are as far apart as the poles!"

"Yes, pastor," began old Sam, "but both are thinking about money or the lack of it or the related problems of taxes, inflation or insurance, to the point that they rarely think about God; rarely think about spreading the Good News

## Agent of Change

**C**hange is occurring around us all the time, but being sensitive to it is necessary to be able to respond to it. To be an agent of change, we must realize that there is an ongoing need to wake up before it's too late.

If you put a frog in a pot of cold water and then gradually turn up the heat, the frog won't jump out and will ultimately be boiled to death. It is capable of jumping out, yet the urgency or change in the situation fails to stir the frog into action.

If we could change the world, how would we want to go? For God or against God? If we have faith in God and realize the power of God's grace within us, we accept God's will and use the gifts bestowed upon us to further God's kingdom.

I can't change the world, but I can do my own small share. Many calls come to us, for our time, talent and treasure to change it one step at a time. Do we respond to these calls on the personal level, family level, church level, community level? Do we act as an agent of change to make the world a better place even if it is only one step at a time?



*“God has given each of us the ability to do certain things well” (Romans 12:6). “Be sure to use the abilities God has given to you ... Put these abilities to work; throw yourself into your tasks... “ (1 Timothy 4:14-15). Finally, we should remember Colossians 3:23-25, which tells us to work cheerfully in all we do, just as though we were working for Jesus.*


## Steward of the Month

### Our Man!

**Submitted by: Iora, Lake Placid, NY**

**I** have recently been introduced to Nip Rogers, a local artist in our small community. Since meeting Mr. Rogers, I have learned of the many different avenues he chooses to serve the Lord.


It is better to give than receive and Nip is a prime example of this stewardship to God. As a starving artist, he never speaks of his own woes. Instead he helps unload the truck at the local food pantry or helps the homeless find places to live. He donates his art to a show to support a school in Africa, helps his parents through the aging process, and he visits locals who are sick or in need of a smiling face. He is also a hospice volunteer, an active church member, a good friend to all and always greets folks with a positive attitude and a smile. He is a shining example of being a light for God and his people.

He is a father to four and has made memories for his children to last them a lifetime through his Christianity to others. You just gotta meet this man. 



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### **Old Sam Elder...**

or never think about the needs of their fellow man. For both men, preoccupation with their treasure, or the lack of it, has shut God out of their lives. 



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