

A Few Thoughts About the Offertory of the Mass...

The Preparation of the Table and Gifts



The first half of the Mass, known as the Liturgy of The Word, concludes with this tradition which is quite ancient in our Church. It begins with the congregation taking their seats, signifying a pause, a response, a community moment; the table is prepared, books set, wine poured, bread and gifts brought to the table. Ministers of Hospitality pass the basket where our gifts are placed before they go to the altar. Giving in gratitude, almsgiving has always been a part of who we are as a faith community. It's about the gift of ourselves (from God). It's about grateful return for gifts received. The ancient practice of tithing, is personal as well as a communal giving; which stems from our awareness of who we are: God's people in the Espiritu Santo faith community sharing the common vision and desire to support the mission of the parish, the poor, and the universal Church. Writing a check, offering cash, using the Automated Offertory Giving option, bringing in donations of food, clothing blankets or other items for the needy is a vital liturgical action...the work of the people on behalf of the larger community.

During the Preparation of the Table and Gifts (Offertory) the gifts that are brought forth represent our very lives: not only the work of our hands, but our joys and sorrows, successes and failures, gifts and limitations, all of which are joined to the offering of Christ. It is so important to be a part of this, to be transformed, however small our offering may seem, this physical act of giving, binds us once again as community. So that is why we use our envelopes. Together we do the work of the Lord and together we participate in our gift-giving to the Lord. Let us not sit back and watch the basket go by. Let us rather share in this communal gift-giving experience, just as we share in the body and blood of Christ.

The spirituality and philosophy of this part of the Mass has not changed since the start of Catholicism. What has changed is the way we can bring our sacrifice to the table. This is why the Automated Giving Program has been instituted and is available as another means to give back in gratitude. It offers a chance to more easily make our offering from our "first fruits", those gifts given by God, gratefully received, cultivated, and returned to God. How so?... by allowing us to express this gratitude in a planned, proportionate, responsible and intentional way; much like the way we treat our other necessities in life such as our mortgage or rent, food and clothing. **Simply put: It's made a part of your life.** We are made in the image and likeness of God – a triune God who is Giver, Gift, and the Spirit of giving. Small wonder then, that we are happiest when we respond to the call to give, because that is when we are most like Him.



Automated Offertory Giving (AOG)

As a reminder, Espiritu Santo Church is offering parishioners the convenience of Automated Offertory Giving (AOG). In this program the parishioner authorizes the Church to debit either their checking or savings account in lieu of writing a check or giving cash. The Automated Offertory Giving program allows those who embrace good stewardship an opportunity to keep the Church a priority when it comes to sharing their first fruits and at the same time provides the Church with a steady stream of revenue. Additionally, this program is more secure and less time consuming than handling and processing checks and cash. This will also give the Church a way to provide donation reports for tax purposes to those parishioners who tend to give loose cash. The program offers either weekly or monthly deductions. If interested in the program, complete the form on the next page and return it to the Church office. Additional forms are available in the Church office. If you have questions, contact Leanne Voiland at 726-8477 ext. 325. Unfortunately we are not offering debit to credit cards at this time.

Authorization Agreement For Debits

I (we) hereby authorize Espiritu Santo Catholic Church, hereinafter called, **The Church**, to initiate debit (withdrawal) from my Checking Account or Savings Account (select one) depository financial institution named below, hereinafter called **Depository**. I (we) acknowledge that the origination of ACH transactions to my account must comply with the provisions of U.S. law.

Depository Information

Bank Name: _____

Routing Number: _____ Bank Account Number _____

** Please attach a voided check with your completed form **

Stewardship (scheduled withdrawal): Frequency of donation

Weekly (each Tuesday): 52 donations Amount: _____

Monthly (2nd Tuesday of the Month): 12 donations Amount _____

This authorization is to remain in full force and effect until **The Church** has received written notification from me (or either of us) of its termination in such time and in such manner as to afford **The Church** and the **Depository** a reasonable opportunity to act on it.

Parishioner Name _____ Parishioner ID: _____
(Envelope #)

Address _____

Phone# _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____