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In preparation for our annual recommitment to TITHING, I would like to discuss this act of faith, rooted in biblical times. Good day! My name is Angela Scirpo, and I have been tithing for 5 years since it was first introduced in our parish. The word tithing means 10% or 1/10th of one's annual income — 5% to church and 5% to charity.

Although a strange sounding word, one infrequently heard outside of a spiritual context, tithing was not unfamiliar to me, having heard my dad reference it frequently when I was growing up. He always spoke of its benefits, citing it as an open invitation, welcoming God into our lives. God's daily presence in our lives is a huge benefit, but being a generous God, He continues to bless our lives in various ways, sometimes when least expected. While those who tithe may expect God to release blessings in their lives, keep in mind that if you opt to tithe, give without expecting anything in return. However, be prepared to be amazed how God will provide in some way in your life.

My personal experience with tithing began when our pastor, Fr. John, engaged the McKenna Stewardship Ministry, a corps of lay persons, to introduce tithing to our group in the fall of 2014. A year or so earlier I had contemplated tithing, but decided it was not necessary. But I kept recalling my dad's words about inviting God into my life through tithing. Being open minded, I attended that meeting. Wow! What a dynamic presentation! What faith! That powerful message changed my mindset. The Holy Spirit had allowed me from that day forward, to take a closer look at God's presence in my life, in ways I had taken for granted. Borrowing from our Fr. Ernie's Pentecostal homily, the Spirit is the most silent member of the Trinity, but speaks with the loudest voice.

Isn't it time to take inventory of God's impact on your life? Material possessions aside, think about yours and your family's health and well-being, your freedom, your independence. If reliant on someone to assist with your activities of daily living, thank God for blessing you with that special caregiver in your life.

Like anything new in life, after a while tithing becomes second nature, but you need to scrutinize your priorities. Think about that something you cannot live without. Is it a necessity or a whim? Look more closely at the importance of giving and generosity rather than temporal gratification. As parishioners of St. Pius X we are truly blessed not only to be a tithing Parish, enabled to deepen and strengthen our relationship with our loving God, but also being given the opportunity to utilize our God-given resources of Time, Talent, and Treasure.

Within this vibrant faith community are many good stewards—service providers who generously give some or all of the aforementioned assets, expecting nothing in return.

With Jesus as our role model, having said He came not to be served but to serve, please consider joining fellow parishioners embracing stewardship as a way of a life of service. Please avoid indecisiveness and commit to tithing to protect what God has generously provided and to make a difference.

In closing, how does the quote from 2 Corinthians, 9:6-8 apply to you? "Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each of you should consider what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly, or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." How will you make a difference from this day forward?

Thank you for your time, and...blessings this day and beyond.