

# Giving Our Thanks & Praise

# Planning Workbook

Use this Planning Workbook to put the elements of your giving program together. Pull the ideas out of the Program Guide and make them your own to suit the specifics of your congregation.

This workbook helps you decide what you want to achieve and easily measure your success. Hard work and focus in this planning stage will likely lead to celebration in one or more areas later on.

Begin with determining the general shape of the program. Use the data tables to assist with setting goals; review the outlines for a one-, three- or five-week program and then use the checklists that are provided for each of the ways of inviting.

We suggest that each member of the Giving Team have a copy. It is a way of keeping track.

## Giving Team Members

Name	Email/phone

## Meeting Dates

Meeting 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Meeting 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Orientation sessions on face-to-face invitations: \_\_\_\_\_

## Inviting Every Person Method

Face-to-face conversations: individuals/households or small groups

Letter of Invitation/direct mail

## Period of the Giving Program

**One Sunday** (plan on p. 6 of this workbook) – focus on gratitude

**Three Sundays** (plan on p. 8 of this workbook) – focus on discipleship, generosity, and gratitude

**Five Sundays** (plan on p. 11 of this workbook) – focus on discipleship, mission, generosity, and gratitude

# Setting Goals

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If you have a goal, you have a dream to be fulfilled. You will know what you are working toward, and you will know if you are successful.

A parish giving program can have many different goals. While generous donations are an obvious goal, there are others, such as increasing participation rates, increasing donations received, or having more people set up Pre-Authorized Remittance (PAR). If this is your first giving program in a while—or in living memory—then we suggest that you begin with a clearly achievable goal. We encourage a range of goals and have provided a set of potential ones to assist you. Here is a list to get you started. Check all that apply, add specific details, and edit and add to the list to suit your parish's needs:

- To pray** about how we respond to God's mission in our community
- To ensure** that everyone knows about our mission and what we fund
- To include** our mission and ministry in our liturgy weekly
- To preach** about giving, generosity, and gratitude, and encourage discipleship
- To encourage** giving and generosity as a spiritual practice
- To tell the story** of our local mission and ministry in all our communications
- To Invite every person** in our parish to make giving a regular part of their life of faith
- To increase participation** in giving to mission and ministry by \_\_\_\_\_% or by \_\_\_\_\_ individual givers. (For example, "We would like to welcome 20 new givers to our mission and ministry and have 20 other givers increase their gifts, so that the total giving increases by 10% and the average gift increases by 5%.")
- To increase** the average gift to mission and ministry by \_\_\_\_\_%
- To increase** the number of gifts for mission and ministry by \_\_\_\_\_%
- To set a goal** for mission and ministry giving of \$\_\_\_\_\_
- To share stories** from the parish of why people give
- To thank each person** for their generosity in ways that are timely, personal, and sincere

# Information Gathering

## Number of People Giving at Various Levels

*(Use the most current information; to see trends, go back two or three years.)*

Annual donation range (for all purposes)	20____ Number of regular givers in this range	20____ Total donations in this range (\$)	Our goal for Number of regular givers in this range	Our goal for Total donations (\$)
\$5,000+				
to \$5,000				
to \$2,500				
to \$1,500				
to \$1,000				
to \$500				
to \$300				
to \$200				
to \$100				
Total				

### Other helpful data

- % of members giving: \_\_\_\_\_
- Average annual gift: \_\_\_\_\_
- Median annual gift: \_\_\_\_\_

## Pre-Authorized Remittance

% of members who give through PAR	Current % of our members	_____ %
	Our goal	_____ %
Average gift of those who give through PAR	Current \$ amount for our congregation	\$ _____
	Our goal	\$ _____

## Our Goals

*Main goal:*

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*Secondary goals:*

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*How we will measure success:*

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# Program Timeline/Plans

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## One-Week Program – Gratitude Sunday

This very short program focuses on gratitude and thanking. To begin to prepare the ground for a program that focuses on Inspiring, Inviting and Thanking, you might want to set aside time around one Sunday to focus on gratitude. A culture of generosity is built on a foundation of gratitude.

We thank God for the blessings in our lives. God is generous again, again, and again. Consider how you can say thank you or show gratitude again, again, and again—and in many different ways. Find opportunities to say thank you directly. Find opportunities to deliver it personally. Gratitude needs to be planned if it is to become a habit in your congregation.

Here are some ideas to get you started:

### Preach on Gratitude

Share your own experiences of gratitude in a sermon.

Offer your own gratitude in a sermon.

Invite others to share their experience of gratitude.

### Spiritual Practice

Begin a discipline of

- keeping your own daily Gratitude Journal
- sending two (or five) thank-you cards a week to people you notice doing good things. If, or when, you run out of people in your parish, go wider—thank the teachers in the neighbourhood school, the first responders, the aides in the nursing home

### Create a Gratitude Team

Gather a few people together over coffee and treats. Ask yourselves:

- Who is doing things in our parish that go unnoticed or recognized?

OR

- If we were expecting a visit from a distinguished visitor (the Bishop, or Archbishop Desmond Tutu), what ministries and achievements would we want to share and highlight? Who are the saints in your parish you would want to introduce to this visitor?

OR

- Identify the people involved in ministries and programs your parish is involved with: outreach, pastoral care, learning and formation, worship...  
How are members of your parish contributing to the wider community, volunteering, sitting on boards...

Now, how can we thank these individuals in ways that are personal, timely, and sincere?

## **Gratitude Mailing**

Create a gratitude package to give to every household in your congregation, sharing the things that your parish can be grateful for. Personalize it with a handwritten note with a specific thank-you for ways the person or family makes a difference.

## Three-Week Program

This program focuses on discipleship, generosity, and gratitude, and uses a Letter of Invitation to every person.

Set yourself a modest goal, such as:

- Preaching on discipleship, generosity, and gratitude
- Inviting someone to tell their “Why I give” story to the congregation
- Writing two thank-you notes a week for two months
- Noticing when people do good things and making a habit of saying thank you to them

Date(s)	Description	Volunteer(s) Who will do What by When
	<p><b>Planning</b></p> <p><b>Worship</b> Look at Liturgical Resources for ideas for preaching, hymns, prayers.</p> <p><b>Announce the Program</b> A month or more before Sunday 1. Draft all communications at this time. Two weeks before Sunday 1, announce the Giving Our Thanks &amp; Praise program: send a letter (template on p. 23). Announcement in your Sunday worship and bulletin, in a newsletter, etc. One of the Giving Team could share their “Why I give” story.</p>	
	<p><b>Invite: Letter of Invitation (pp. 42–48)</b> Two weeks before Sunday 1, write the Letter of Invitation to include in the Inviting Every Person Package.</p>	



	<p><b>Inviting Every Person Package (pp. 47–53)</b>  Assemble a package for each person/ household to be handed out on Sunday 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Letter of Invitation: consider including a handwritten thank-you at the beginning or end of the letter.</li> <li>• Step Chart</li> <li>• PAR and other information</li> <li>• Intention card and reply envelope</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>Program Week 1</b>  <b><i>Sunday 1 Worship Focus – Discipleship and the Life of Faith</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preach on personal stewardship of all that we have been given; following Jesus; the Baptismal Covenant / Marks of Mission.</li> <li>• Hand out the Inviting Every Person Package at worship. Deliver or mail those not picked up.</li> <li>• Highlight one program or ministry that is central to the life of your community. What is its impact? What difference does it make?</li> <li>• Publicly thank those who are leading or supporting that program or ministry. Be creative in your thanking—make it timely, personal, and sincere.</li> </ul>	

	<p><b>Program Week 2</b>  <b><i>Sunday 2 Worship Focus –</i></b>  <b><i>Living God's Mission Locally</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highlight the impact of an area of each of the following ministries:  Outreach  Pastoral care  Learning and formation  Worship</li> <li>• Invite a person to share the impact of that ministry in their life or the life of the community – within and beyond the church walls.</li> <li>• Preach on the impact of generosity – see worship and preaching resources area on website.</li> <li>• Remind people to return their response cards next Sunday.</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>Program Week 3</b>  <b><i>Sunday 3 Worship Focus –</i></b>  <b><i>Inviting Generosity and Modelling Gratitude</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is the Sunday to preach about and model gratitude!</li> <li>• Receive the intention cards at the Offertory.</li> <li>• Celebrate! Dedicate and celebrate the intention cards as a symbol of people's generosity.</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>Thanking, Wrap-Up, and Evaluation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thank each giver personally, whether in person or through a thank-you note or card.</li> <li>• Debrief, do an evaluation, and plan for next time.</li> </ul>	

## Five-Week Program

This program focuses on discipleship, mission, generosity, and gratitude, giving ample time to share personal stories of why people give and about the impact of the mission of the parish. It uses a Face-to-Face invitation or Letter to encourage generous support of the mission.

Date(s)	Description	Volunteer(s) Who will do What by When
	<p><b>Planning</b></p> <p><b>Worship</b> Look at Liturgical Resources for ideas for preaching, hymns, prayers.</p> <p><b>Orientation session (pp. 40–41)</b> A month or more before Sunday 1, get some tips and practise inviting people to give.</p>	
	<p><b>Announce the program</b> A month or more before Sunday 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decide when you will announce the program at worship, in the bulletin, etc.; draft all communications at this time if you wish.</li> <li>• Draft and mail letter to introduce the program (pp. 22–24, 42–45).</li> <li>• Plan to commission Giving Team members on Sunday 1.</li> </ul>	

	<p><b>Invite: Face-to-Face or in Letter of Invitation (pp. 40–45)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Face-to-face conversations: immediately following Sunday 1 and going no longer than the Saturday before Sunday 4. Hand out the Inviting Every Person Package at the time of the conversations (see below).</li> </ul> <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Letter of Invitation: mail with the Inviting Every Person Package (see below) immediately following Sunday 1 and going no later than the Saturday before Sunday 4. Immediately following Sunday 4, follow up with those who have not yet responded or returned their Intention Card.</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>Program Week 1</b>  <b><i>Sunday 1 Worship Focus – Discipleship and the Life of Faith</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preach on personal stewardship of all that we have been given; following Jesus; the Baptismal Covenant / Marks of Mission.</li> <li>• Prepare verbal announcement, bulletin insert, email, or other communications to introduce the giving program to the congregation.</li> <li>• Assemble an Inviting Every Person Package for each person/ household: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Narrative budget</li> <li>– “Why I give” testimonials</li> <li>– Intention card and return envelope</li> <li>– Giving Guide and Proportional Giving Chart OR Step Chart</li> <li>– Anything else to draw attention to the ministry of the congregation and the giving program</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Letter of Invitation: mail this week with the package above, or no later than the Saturday before Sunday 4.</li> </ul>	

	<p><b>Program Week 2</b>  <b><i>Sundays 2 &amp; 3 Worship Focus</i></b>  <b><i>Living God's Mission Locally</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preach on God's mission</li> <li>• Highlight the impact of an area of each of the following ministries: Outreach Pastoral care Learning and formation Worship</li> <li>• Invite a person to share the impact of that ministry in their life or the life of the community – within and beyond the church walls.</li> <li>• Face-to-face conversations: schedule for this week through the Saturday before Sunday 4. Stay in touch with volunteers.</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>Program Week 3</b>  <b><i>Sundays 2 &amp; 3 Worship Focus</i></b>  <b><i>Living God's Mission Locally</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preach on God's mission</li> <li>• Highlight the impact of an area of each of the following ministries: Outreach Pastoral care Learning and formation worship.</li> <li>• Invite a person to share the impact of that ministry in their life or the life of the community – within and beyond the church walls.</li> <li>• Face-to-face conversations: continue this week through the Saturday before Sunday 4. Stay in touch with volunteers.</li> </ul>	

	<p><b>Program Week 4</b>  <b>Sunday 4 Worship Focus</b>  <b>Inviting Generosity; Giving Sunday</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preach on God's call to live generously.</li> <li>• Face-to-face conversations: complete these this week. Stay in touch with volunteers.</li> <li>• Between Sunday 4 and the Saturday before Sunday 5: follow up with those who have not yet responded or returned their intention card.</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>Program Week 5</b>  <b>Sunday 5 Worship Focus</b>  <b>Giving Thanks; Modelling Gratitude</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preach about gratitude.</li> <li>• Tabulate all gifts received to announce on Sunday 5.</li> <li>• Plan to thank everyone at Sunday worship.</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>Thanking, Wrap-Up, and Evaluation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thank each giver personally, whether in person or through a thank-you note or card.</li> <li>• Debrief, do an evaluation, and plan for next time.</li> </ul>	

# Planning for Face-to-Face Conversations

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Description	Notes
Volunteer Inviters: <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• One volunteer for every 10 individuals/ households</li><li>• Two or more volunteers for every small group gathering of 10–20 people</li></ul>
Divide up the Parish List	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify who will attend each gathering, with the objective of everyone attending one.</li><li>• Are there any members who might share their own “Why I give” story in the gatherings?</li></ul>

<p>Inviting Period (dates/sessions):</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>Start immediately following Sunday 1 and go no longer than the Saturday before Sunday 4.</p>
<p>Asking Every Person Package</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Narrative budget</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> "Why I give" stories</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Proportional Giving Chart or Step Chart</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Intention card and self-addressed envelope</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> _____</p>	<p>Envelope or folder for each person/family = _____ packages</p> <p>Hand out at the conversations.</p>
<p>During the Inviting Period</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure everyone is invited to give.</li> <li>• Ensure all intention cards are returned, regardless of response.</li> </ul>
<p>Follow-up</p>	<p>Between Sunday 4 and Sunday 5, follow up with those who have not yet responded or returned their intention card. The goal is to have everyone return their card, regardless of whether they give a gift.</p>



# Planning for a Letter of Invitation

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<p>Review Letter-Writing Guidelines</p>	<p>Draft your Letter.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See the guidelines in the Program Guide (pp. 44–45).</li> <li>• See samples of excellent letters online</li> </ul>
<p>Narrative budget</p>	<p>Prepare a one-page narrative budget (pp.37–38).</p>
<p>Delivery Date: _____</p>	<p>Immediately following Sunday 1 and going no later than the Saturday before Sunday 4.</p>
<p>Deliver or mail the Asking Every Person Package</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Narrative budget</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> “Why I give” stories</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Proportional Giving Chart or Step Chart</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Intention card and self-addressed envelope</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> _____</p>	<p>Envelope or folder for each person/family</p> <p>= _____ packages</p>
<p>Follow-up</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure all intention cards are returned, regardless of response.</li> <li>• Between Sunday 4 and Sunday 5, follow up with those who have not yet responded or returned their intention card. The goal is to have everyone return their card, regardless of whether they give a gift.</li> </ul>

# Evaluation

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1. Reviewing the goals we recorded on pages 1–2 of this worksheet, how did we measure up?

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2. What worked well?

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3. What will we do the same next year?

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4. What we will do differently next year?

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5. Our next steps:

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giving  
our thanks & praise