

Sample In-Pew Commitment Weekend Pulpit Presentation

This instruction is most successful when delivered by the pastor either before Mass or after the homily.

Here at (your parish name) and throughout our diocese we have much to be grateful for. We have truly been blessed as a faith family. This past year our parish and our diocese embarked on a new journey with a mutually-shared vision: Courageously Living the Gospel. We continue that journey, renewed with a sacred purpose of proclaiming the gospel and inviting those we encounter to join us. It truly an exciting time to be a disciple of Christ in the Diocese of St. Petersburg.

I want to introduce the 2020 Annual Pastoral Appeal (APA): ***WE ARE SALT & LIGHT Living the Gospel through the Annual Pastoral Appeal***. This is our diocesan annual appeal that invites every parishioner to participate in supporting the ministries, programs and services of our local Church, which serve us in our parish and many in need outside of our parish boundaries.

As your pastor, I want to let you know that I support this appeal and the hope it provides for both our parish and for those whom are brought closer to Christ. *(You may mention here the ministries, programs and services that your assessment dollars fund and that this fundraiser known as APA helps pay that assessment.)*

You should have received a packet in the mail at home which includes a message from Bishop Parkes, as well as a brochure that provides information on how your donations support diocesan ministries, programs and services. More information can be found online in the 2019 Annual Report – please see our bulletin for the website. I would like to emphasize the spiritual effect the appeal has on our parish and diocese. This appeal provides the means to continue the mission that Christ has entrusted to us: to serve, to educate, to care for the poor, and to be a beacon of hope for all. The ministries, programs, and services that are funded from this effort allow us to fulfill this responsibility, and we are all invited to make a gift, a courageous gift, that demonstrates how as disciples we are living the gospel and sharing it with those we encounter.

I pray that each family will assess their own resources and generously make a gift of substance and not merely one of convenience. This appeal is based on equal sacrifice, not equal giving. I cannot ask everyone to consider the same size gift, but I ask that everyone let their gift reflect how generous God has been with His gifts. Can you consider a gift of \$25, \$40 or \$50 each month for the rest of this year? That amount will equal a pledge of \$250, \$400 or \$500 by the end of the year.

I know from personal experience that it is easier to make a gift of sacrifice if you can spread it out, rather than make a full, one-time gift. It is easy, when surrounded by so many people, to think that it won't matter if you don't participate. But each gift does make a difference, and it is noticed. I need everyone to prayerfully consider participation. For those who have never given, it is vital to understand we are God's Salt of the earth and Light of the world. Our parish needs you to take a leap of faith – our parish needs you, and so does the Church.

As you think about what you will give, remember, this gift is different from your gift each weekend to our parish. This is in addition to your offertory giving. Also, please know these pledges are a "good faith effort." I know that everyone will do their very best to fulfill their pledges, and that is all we ask - that you do your best. We know that things happen, and you may need to change your pledge in the future. That's ok. If a change is needed in the future, it can be made. And if that change is an increase, well, that is ok, too.

At this point, I ask everyone to make their commitment over the next few minutes. If you did not bring your pledge card from home, please complete a pledge envelope found in your pew. Please fill in all the information on the pledge envelope clearly. The pledge envelope has a section marked "Gifts to Consider" which breaks down what 10 equal monthly payments would be, and what the total pledge will come to if all payments are completed. For example, 10 monthly payments of \$30 equal a total pledge of \$300. Once you decide on the amount you want to give, fill out the

giving information on the bottom left of the envelope – the area marked “Total Pledge/Amount Enclosed/Balance Due.” Also indicate if you want to make payments monthly or annually, or as one-time gift to complete your “Balance Due.”

A down payment on your pledge is not necessary or required. If you are able to make one, please do. If you can’t make a down payment, don’t let that stop you from making your pledge.

For those of you who have already made a gift or pledge by sending in your pledge card that you received at home, I **thank you for your generosity**. I am going to pause to give those who haven’t yet completed their commitment time to fill out their pledge forms, while I do the same. (PAUSE AND FILL OUT A PLEDGE ENVELOPE, EVEN IF YOU HAVE ALREADY DONE SO. THIS WILL ENCOURAGE YOUR PARISHIONERS TO DO THE SAME.)

At this time, I ask the Hospitality Ministers/Ushers to pick up all pledge envelopes, including those pledge cards received at home that have been brought in today (or have parishioners bring them to the altar). **Thank you** once again for listening with an open heart. All gifts are an act of courage and in a few weeks when the active phase of the APA concludes, I know we will have done our part as a parish family to live the Gospel through the Annual Pastoral Appeal.