



St. John the Baptist Orthodox Church  
301 Struthers-Liberty Road  
Campbell, Ohio 44405-1949  
Tel. (330) 755-4931

V. Rev. Andrew D. Nelko, Rector

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## “Return to me and I will return to you”

November 4, 2012  
Venerable Joannicius the Great

Dear Brothers & Sisters,

Stewardship is our response to God’s grace and moves us from grace to gratitude. Just as we love because God first loved us (1 John 4:14), we give because God first gave to us. The question of the Psalmist “What shall I give to the Lord in return for all His benefits towards me?” (Ps 116:2), is answered in every liturgy when the celebrant calls us to “offer ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ our God.”

When we give to God we do not think in terms of payment or dues but of *gift*. What a world of difference between these words! So long as we think in terms of payment or dues, the world is a drab place where we labor for hire. It is the counting house, not the palace of a king. This is why we say that when we give to God it is never a collection or a payment but always an offering."

Paying of “dues” has never been the proper term for being a member of the church. The church is not a lodge or a club. But giving a heartfelt pledge as an offering based on what you know you can give will certainly make us feel part of the church in a much more meaningful way. Truly we will be members in good standing with God.

With prayerful consideration we ask that you start now to work the church into your budget for next year. It is very important to treat the church offering as a budgeted item in your planning and not as an afterthought or a way of giving the leftovers. It will also show just how much the church means in relation to the other expenses. Cable television, cell phones, vacations, entertainment expenses, etc. are already part of your budget. How does the church fit into your budget?

Please complete the enclosed Commitment/Pledge Card and information form and return it to the church by **December 9<sup>th</sup>**. Your offering and commitment will enable our parish of St. John the Baptist to continue to enhance the spiritual growth of those entrusted to our care.

We offer our personal thanks for your generosity and partnership in Christ’s work of salvation.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Fr. Andrew".

V. Rev. Andrew D. Nelko  
(Rector)

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James Hryb, Jr.".

James Hryb, Jr.  
(Parish Stewardship Coordinator)

