

IMPORTANT PARISH NOTICE

The Parish Council feels compelled to bring to all of our beloved parishioners excerpts and clarifications from the Uniform Parish Regulations of our Holy Archdiocese of America so that it's clear what is meant by a parishioner being "**in good standing**" and who is not.

Every person who is baptized and chrismated according to the rites of the Orthodox Church is a **parishioner**. The religious, moral, and social duties of a parishioner are to apply the tenets of the Orthodox Faith; faithfully attend the Divine Liturgy and participate regularly in the holy sacraments; contribute towards the progress of the Church's sacred mission; and be an effective witness and example of the Orthodox Faith and Traditions to all people.

Parishioner in Good Standing: At a minimum, a parishioner in good standing must be eighteen years of age or over and no longer be attending school or training full time. ***They also must be current in his or her stewardship and other financial obligations to the Parish. They are required to pledge their own stewardship annually***, whether they live with parents or not. Each year requires a renewal of their stewardship pledge. (Stewardship is *recommended* to be ten percent (10%) of one's annual income as stated in Holy Scripture to help meet the financial obligations of the Parish, the Metropolis, and the Archdiocese.)

What does "True Stewardship" mean?

Pledge amounts are not fixed and should reflect your means and your commitment to supporting St. Vasilios's sacred mission. We are not on a "dues system" like a club or gym membership and have no minimums or maximums. (Every person shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the LORD your God which he has given you. Deuteronomy 16:17)

The idea that as a Parish we are able to set an amount that is equally fair for all the faithful, the payment of which makes them members in good standing with rights and privileges, is *flawed* for a number of reasons. Is it fair to think that the elderly widow living on Social Security, the successful real estate developer, the banker, the young tradesman with a growing family, the teacher, and the lawyer each have received the same material blessings and have the same ability to give?

What if I am faced with a hardship and cannot pledge my financial support?

-**Temporary Financial Hardship** may be applied for by a parishioner and is evaluated **confidentially on an annual basis** through the Parish Presiding Priest or Stewardship Chair and valid for **12 months only**.

- **Notice of a Parish Council (PC) policy for non-members and lapsed members:** A **Usage Fee** determined by the PC to cover the costs of certain expenses that are incurred by the Parish for sacraments such as baptisms or weddings will be implemented, and **in addition** non-members and lapsed members must complete a stewardship application and pledge financial support to the Church annually.

- Is there a Gratis Status that I no longer have to pledge when I am elderly?

-Since we are on True Stewardship, and parishioners can pledge the amount that they are able to, there will **NO** longer be a **Gratis Status** except for those elderly and retired who were granted this status prior to our beginning of the **true stewardship** system. Elders, retirees, or disabled will always be treated with utmost compassion and Christian love by our Parish.