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## Pledge Program FAQ

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### **EDUCATION**

#### **What is the Pledge program?**

*The Pledge program simplifies how your donations to the church are given and tracked. You start by making a pledge to donate an amount you declare over the course of the year. You also specify when you will donate (e.g. each week, each quarter, etc.) and how you will donate (e.g. envelope system, personal checks in the discos, automated credit card payments, etc.) over the year. You will receive quarterly statements for your records and tax purposes showing all your recorded donations against your annual pledged amount.*

#### **Where does the donated money go?**

*Pledge donations go into what is called the “general fund”. This money is used to pay all the ongoing, routine expenses necessary to maintain the church and property, such as telephones, utilities bills, Sunday school materials, salaries, cleaning and insurance.*

#### **How does it work?**

- 1. Parishioners fill out a Pledge enrollment form and make a financial commitment to donate a declared amount over the course of the year. The forms are at the donation table near the candle stand. Ideally, your annual pledge will be spread over four quarters.*
- 2. Turn this form into the church office, or the donation table, or any Church Committee member.*
- 3. When you donate, you can use the envelope system (enclose cash or check)—all envelopes get credited toward your pledge. Or you can also use your Visa or MasterCard for either automatic or periodic donations toward your pledge. Finally, you can just simply write checks and indicate “pledge” in the memo. You will receive quarterly reminders and financial statements showing your pledge status. All donations are of course tax deductible. If you do not have envelopes for 2007, contact the church office.*

#### **What are the goals for 2007?**

*It costs nearly \$300,000 per year to support the operations and maintenance of our church and property. Our minimum goal is therefore to raise \$300,000 in annual donations this year to avoid having to borrow money. We fell short of this goal last year, so we’re asking all donors to please increase their planned giving this year to help ensure we are profitable in 2007.*

#### **Do all my donations count toward my pledge?**

*Generally speaking, if you make a Pledge, then donations such as those you make using the envelope system or when putting a check in the discos, will be credited automatically toward your annual pledge. It is a good idea to write the word “pledge” on your donation to make sure. The only exceptions are cases where you write a check or give cash to St. Clement for another purpose. For example, you buy two fish dinners at the fish fry and pay by check. That check counts toward the purchase of those dinners and will not be credited toward your pledge.*

### **OBJECTIONS**

#### **Privacy: What about my privacy? What I donate is personal, etc.**

*When you make a Pledge, the information is kept confidential within the church records system. Only the Church Committee Treasurer, the priest and the church office administrator have direct*

*access to this information. Our policy is to restrict access to this information and respect each donor's privacy. The quarterly financial statements you will receive are individually direct mailed straight to you.*

*As an added measure of privacy, you can request that your name be withheld as anonymous on any public listing of pledge donor names.*

**Being Obligated: I don't want to be obligated to give a set amount. Can't I just make simple donations as I go?**

*You can of course make donations any time or way you like. The church needs your support and appreciates every contribution.*

*We are all trustees of our church and obligated to support it as it supports us. Making a pledge is a commitment in advance to work toward giving the church your support. The pledge system is designed to give you great flexibility to donate when you want, how you want. You can even change your pledge amount at any time. There is no penalty or pressure to donate, or any repercussion if a pledge falls behind. The idea behind pledging is to give the church a "heads-up" on what to financially expect throughout the year, and give you as the donor an instrument to help you track your progress and conveniently support your church.*

**Capital Fund: I already chose to support the Capital Fund—why Pledge?**

*First, thank you for supporting the Capital Fund. As you know, it is a 3-year, focused program to raise funds for one-time, capital-intensive projects. This list of projects includes the dome repairs and restorations, heating system replacement, parking lot repaving and other relatively rare, but expensive capital improvement projects. The costs of these projects are significant, so we've decided not to try and pay for them out of the normal \$300,000 general fund, and to instead finance them separately. The Capital Fund program was therefore begun immediately after the decision to remain in our present location was made.*

*But while we tackle these capital-intensive projects over the next three years, we still need to "keep the doors open" and pay for existing operations and maintenance. When you make a Pledge, your donations go to our "general fund" to support these day to day operations of our entire church, property and employees. In this extraordinary year, we need to support \*both\* the capital fund \*and\* the general fund. By making a pledge, your donations will help us cover our expected annual \$300,000 of operating costs this year.*

*It is critical for our future that both the Capital Fund and Pledge program achieve their goals this year.*

**Why Pledge—what are the benefits to the church and to me?**

- *Your pledge underscores your commitment to God and your church*
- *These donations will preserve the education, worship, pastoral and social programs which depend on this financial support to continue and flourish*
- *It gives the church leadership visibility into the full year cash flow to better plan, budget and anticipate any shortfalls*
- *Pledging makes it easy for you to track your donations, receive quarterly statements for tax purposes and donate in the ways most convenient for you*

**Contact the church (email: [office@stclementchurch.net](mailto:office@stclementchurch.net), 313-271-3110) with questions and to pledge!**