Stewardship Letters

St. Martin-in-the-Fields, Lumberton NJ 08048

**Diane Todd**

My name is Diane Todd. I’m 92 years old, and a widow. I’ve been a member of St. Martin’s for about 10 years. My husband and I originally came from Philadelphia, where we attended a large Episcopal Church as youngsters. We were involved in all the youthful activities of the Church – Sunday School, Choir, girls friendly, acolytes, etc. When W.W. II ended and 1our1 young men came home, we formed a Young Adult Group, about 24 of us. We helped with bazaars, dinners, Vestry, etc. We held weekly dances, bringing in the young people in the Community. This is how I met Charles. He was 6 years older than me; we dated, then married and when the children were born, were Baptized there. When we moved to New Jersey we attended several Churches while the children were growing up. When they left home and marred, we went back to our Church in Philadelphia, becoming very active and more involved for many years, until Charles’ health deteriorated. One Sunday we attended St. Martin’s, two gentlemen, John and Mike, saw me helping to get Charles out of the car, and came out to help, and did so every Sunday that we were there. We sat through that one Sunday, listening to everoe as they gave their reports about what was happening at St. Martin’s. We were very impressed and decided this was what we were looking for. A Church where everyone was involved, both in the Church and the Community. It was a family Church, and we became part of the family. When Charles passed away, my children were very concerned for me, and I remember Mother Powell, Deacon Mickey and Marsha telling them “Don’t worry about your Mother, we’ll put her to work,” and they did. It’s a true saying “When the Lord closes a door, He opens another.”

My personal feelings about Stewardship are very simple – to me it’s really just another word for helping, caring giving in whatever way you can – your time, talent, and tithing. It can mean sitting with a sick friend, sharing a problem, enjoying looking at family pictures, sharing the good times with he bad. There were many times when the children were growing up, and money was very tight, it was a struggle for us to make our 10% tithes, so we tried helping in other ways. I don’t think i can put a time on when we started practicing Stewardship. Even when I was younger, I was involved somehow. Sometimes I would go to Church with my maternal grandparents. They were Charter members of an Episcopal Church in Olney, Pennsylvania. One of my Uncles played the organ and sang in the Choir.

Now that I am older, I feel an even deeper obligation to give my 10%, just as I feel an obligation to help when needed at the Church. I pay my apartment rent and other necessary bills for services rendered, and they don’t come near to what I have received from God’s Grace. I have been blessed many times over the years, when problems seemed insurmountable, my prayers were answered – maybe not always the way I had hoped, but in the knowledge that I felt God was listening and leading me in the right direction. I Thank Him every day for the Guidance that I know comes from Him. My family calls me constantly with “Will you put so-and-so on your prayer list.” They know I have a time set aside every day for talking with Him, have a time set aside every day for talking with Him.

When my daughter was alive, she was very active in Church, my younger son and his wife are active in their Church in Harleysville, Pennsylvania. Now the other two boys do not attend regularly, but I’m comfortable with what they do. Charles is a Navy Veteran and is active at his V.F.W. Post and cares for his wife, who is somewhat handicapped. Paul lives in Pennsylvania farm country and helps his neighbor delivering milk and cares for the animals and young calves while they travel, participating in farm shows. Paul makes beautiful stained-glass windows, sometimes taking two years to complete. The profit he makes goes to a foundation in Tyler Quinter’s name, a little boy who died with numerous heart problems.