



THE EASIEST WAY TO REMEMBER YOUR CHURCH

“What is the simplest way to remember our parish in our estate plan?” I was recently asked. What a wonderful question. In response, I gave several ways to choose from. “Different strokes for different folks,” I proposed, “depending upon how your affairs are arranged.”

The Most Popular Way

Most estate gifts received by parishes are in the form of a bequest from a will or a revocable trust. The amount may be a specific dollar amount. More often, the gift is expressed as a percentage—for example, “To St. X Episcopal Church, Smalltown, CA, I leave 10% of the remainder of my estate.”

An Easier Way

When writing or changing your will or trust, it is easy to make provision for a bequest to the church. A way to remember the church without using an attorney to modify your will or trust is to name the church as the beneficiary of a retirement plan or life insurance policy. If you have an IRA, 401(k), or 403(b), you can simply name Episcopal Charities, your parish, or another charity, for a percentage. For example, “40% to St. S. Episcopal Church, Smalltown, CA.” Just call the 800 number on your plan statement and ask for a “Change of Beneficiary” form. It’s easy! Same with life insurance—even with an employer-provided policy.

A More Beneficial Way

Before Sally sold her house, she put part of it in a charitable remainder trust. That way she did not pay any capital gains taxes and received a secure lifetime income as well as a large cash settlement. She named her parish as remainder beneficiary of the trust that paid her income for as long as she lived. When Betty’s CD matured, she used it to buy a charitable gift annuity. This doubled her income, gave her a tax deduction, and will benefit Bishop’s Ranch when she dies.

How Much?

“Your father and I want to put the church in our trust,” my mother once told me, “but we don’t know how much. Any ideas?” she asked. “Well, Mom, you and Dad have always tithed on your income. How about the same 10% in your estate?” “How simple!” she replied. “Why didn’t I think of that?” “In our will,” another parent told me, “we have made St. S. our 4th child.”

There are many different ways to remember your church. The best way for you depends upon your circumstances and your intentions. To learn more about your options, ask your priest. Or call your diocesan Gift Planning Officer at (415) 869-7812.

Let your estate plan become an expression of your values and your faith.

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