

Make vows to the Lord your God and fulfill them. (Psalm 76:11)

Promises are powerful. Promises are the foundation of every relationship we have. In fact, they are the glue that holds all the relationships of society (and therefore society itself) together. When a man and woman are married, they make promises one to the other to “love and to cherish until death do us part.” Christians, of course make this promise before God. Most people go to work with the promise that they will be paid for their work. If they did not believe the promise, most would not go to work. Students study hard because there is a promise attached to it—they will learn what they need to know and will get a good grade in the class. I put gasoline in my car today. I trusted it was gas and not water. Otherwise, I would not have done it. There is absolutely no value in the paper we call money, other than a promise from the United States Government. We trust that if we put our money into the bank, they will allow us to draw it back out.

Some people may question why we make pledges or promises to God concerning our financial support. It’s because promises are powerful. Promises are the foundation of every relationship we have. In fact, they are at the foundation of our most important relationship: our relationship with God. A promise broken in the Garden of Eden broke the relationship God had established with us. Yet, God did not turn His face from us, but He made to Eve the first of many promises foretelling a restored relationship between God and His people. Every promise of salvation made, He kept in Christ, Who gave himself for us on the cross, died and rose again. As St. Paul wrote to the Christians in Corinth, God “*has restored our relationship with Him through Christ . . . In other words, God was using Christ to restore His relationship with humanity*” (2 Cor. 5: 18a, 19). When we were baptized by water and the Spirit into the life, death, and resurrection of God’s Son, we were sealed in the fulfillment of that promise accomplished in Christ. When we come to the Lord’s Supper, we are united in the promise of forgiveness received. The relationship between us and God has been restored, and nothing can separate us from His love. When we make a promise to God, we are responding to all the promises He has made—and kept—in Jesus. When by His Word and Spirit He leads us to step forward and make promises to Him, He is really calling each one of us to a deeper and greater relationship in Him.

As we make our Stewardship promises to God year after year and again this Sunday, as we experience year after year God keeping His promises to us concerning stewardship, God uses these things to strengthen our relationship—our faith—in Him to our great good. In short, through making such promises to our God and walking in the promises He makes to us, we are daily called to a deeper relationship with God in Christ. So, this Sunday, let us, each one of us, make vows (promises) to the Lord, our God, and fulfill them! May God give—and each of us receive—this gift!

Prayer: Dearest Jesus, help me see this opportunity of making a stewardship promise to You as a call to an ever stronger relationship with You who are the resurrection and the life! Amen!