

## **The Pentecost Challenge! Are you up for it?**

From Bishop Sue

On Page 555 of the Book of Common Prayer, you will find the outline of a RULE OF LIFE for Anglicans. It is intended to help us provide some discipline in our spiritual life. It includes the following:

- the regularity of attendance at public worship especially the Holy Communion;
- the discipline of private prayer, Bible reading, and self-discipline;
- bringing the teaching and example of Christ into everyday life;
- the boldness of spoken witness to one's faith in Christ;
- personal service to the Church and community;
- the offering of money according to one's means for the support of the work of the Church at home and overseas.

Most people see the first five clearly as spiritual, but the last one they might argue about! Here is the author of the Book of Common Prayer putting money, our financial offering, into the spiritual RULE OF LIFE. Well, why not? Jesus was clear, "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." (Luke 12: 34).

Many people make a concerted effort to accomplish the first five, especially during Lent, but most would say, "Don't talk to me about my offering! That's private."

Well, I'm about to talk to you about your offering. The Companions on a Journey Program has been emphasizing the shift from a mindset of scarcity to a mindset of abundance. We are called to live in the image of our generous God. Some discipline is required to do that.

The Pentecost Challenge is this: Intentionally increase your offering by 1% of your income.

That means first you have to set out what is your annual income. Decide whether you will use gross income or net income. It doesn't matter. Let's say your net annual income is \$26,000. So your weekly income is \$500 (\$26,000 divided by 52 weeks). Then take the 1% (\$500 divided by 100) and you have \$5.00. That is the amount you would increase your offering each week. If you can't do the math for your own income, there are charts that do the work for you. You can find one on the Diocesan website under Stewardship, Growing by 1%.

Pentecost extends from May 23 to November 21, 2010. Make a commitment to be disciplined with the financial part of your spiritual life. Grow your offering by 1%! Enable your parish to do the ministry God is calling you to do!