

Raising Givers

Our education on planned giving actually started with the teaching found in the third chapter of the book of the prophet Malachi. God says to the people of Israel,

Since the days of your fathers you have turned aside from my statutes, and have not kept them. Return to me, and I will return to you, says the Lord of hosts. But you say, "Why should we return?" Can anyone rob God? But you are robbing me! (Malachi 3:7-8a)

God tells the people of Israel that he has given them a law to follow, which they are ignoring. Their disobedience has taken them far from him and the blessings he wants to share with them. In fact, he accuses them of robbery. How can you rob God? It is not that difficult.

And you say, "How have we robbed you?" Of tithes and contributions! You are indeed accursed, for you, the whole nation, robe me. Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse...try me in this, says the Lord of Hosts: Shall I not open for you the floodgates of heaven, to pour down blessing upon you without measure? (Malachi 3:8b-10)

God promises blessing in our churches and over our lives if we'll just honour his word. Ignoring it, on the other hand, is effectively cutting ourselves off from his blessings. Notice how God says. "Try me in this." He is asking us to test him. When it comes to our money, God wants us to test him and see if he will not be faithful. Just say it and see if he won't work his blessings in your life and the life of your parish. It's a challenge.

Taken from, *Rebuilt*, by Fr. Michael White and Tom Corcoran