

Facing Your Fears – 3 Small Steps to Change

Much of what the Generous Giving team bring to your parishes will be new, different or challenging but will ultimately, if embraced, encourage and enhance generosity in your churches. There is a common understanding that things have to change for progress to be made. The dictionary defines change as ‘moving from one state to another’. It’s an active process not a passive one; but often what we want, is to keep the same state and somehow obtain a different outcome – in reality an impossibility.

These **3 small steps** will help us to recognize our fears and objections and allow us to embrace and partake in the working out of new beneficial practices. Looking at the example of Moses in Exodus 3-4, we will exchange fear for faith by the word of God.

Step 1: Reflect on how new proposals make you feel. If you are someone who is always trying new activities, changing hairstyles or exploring new places, you will feel very differently to someone who has had the same routine for years. God’s proposal to Moses brought his fears to the surface. Excuse after excuse poured from his lips, “I’m no good”. Perhaps you have thought that about yourself for years. We can continually compare ourselves to others and come to that conclusion. Does God describe you like that? No! He says that you are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus for works of service, that he has prepared in advance that you should walk in them. We have to start believing and repeating what God declares about us and not what our minds, fears and anxieties scream at us.

Step 2: Face your Fears. Moses was terrified of returning to Egypt, the place he had fled as a murderer. What would people think of him? Would he be mocked? Or even worse, would he be arrested and punished? Sometimes we have to re-visit the place of our greatest weakness before God moves us to a place of strength. Many years ago, fear had gripped my life but one particularly dark night I felt compelled to pick up my Bible in the midst of it. This is what I read: “The Lord is my helper, I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?” (Hebrews 13:6)

What is the worst that could happen if you press the wrong button on a contactless device? Or ask people to increase their regular giving? We have a habit of fearing the worst. Let your concern be more about pleasing God than pleasing people and living in fear of their reactions. Maybe the outcome will be better than you imagine.

Step 3: Stop making excuses. Gideon twice asked God to clarify what he was being asked to do and God granted his request (Judges 6:36-40). He wasn’t stalling for time. He had been asked to lead a nation into battle and felt the weight of responsibility, so he had to be sure. Moses, however, tried God’s patience. He understood the task ahead and that he was the designated person for it; he just didn’t want to do it as it was way out of his comfort zone.

The Generous Giving team are always ready to clarify and confirm, encourage and enable, equip and motivate. The question is, are you willing to move from one state to another to promote the generous love of God in your community?