

Stewardship Choices in Estate Planning

Our motivation to give comes from Jesus. Our purpose is to glorify Him and honor Him with all we have received. When you consider giving a gift to Mount Carmel Ministries, you need to take time to share why you are doing this with your family. Then make sure that your asset allocation includes a plan that will provide for your spouse, family, retirement, and charitable giving.

What will your legacy be? Everyone has an estate, regardless of its size. In its broadest sense, an estate is simply a word used to describe any property, money or personal belonging that you may have at the time of your death. Even an individual or a couple with a small estate can arrange to leave a charitable gift for Mount Carmel Ministries.

How do you make sure that your gift will go to Mount Carmel Ministries? You need to state your intentions in your estate plan using a will prepared by an attorney. Without this planning, your property and finances will be distributed according to the laws of the state you live in. It may be time to call your attorney, accountant, investment advisors or other specialists to assist you in preparing your first will or to review your present will or estate plan to coincide with your wishes.

What are the ways that you can contribute to Mount Carmel Ministries? The federal government encourages charitable giving by providing some significant tax benefits when one gives a gift to a qualified charity such as Mount Carmel Ministries.

Here are some suggestions for you to consider:

- **Gifts of Cash**

Cash is still the most common way to make a donation. You can deduct an amount up to 50 percent of your adjusted gross income as long as you itemize deductions.

- **Gifts of Securities**

If you have held the stocks for more than one year, you may deduct the full fair market value of the stock on the date of your gift. To give stocks, bonds, or mutual funds, contact your broker or investment advisor, then let our office know.

- **Life Insurance**

Life insurance is another unique option for giving a charitable gift. To qualify for a charitable deduction, you can give a paid up policy or

purchase a new policy. You can purchase a policy and name Mount Carmel Ministries as the owner and beneficiary. You donate the premium amount to Mount Carmel who will pay the annual premium, and you may use the donation for tax purposes. On a policy that you own, you give a percentage (5%, 10%, or more) of the policy to Mount Carmel. For those interested in providing for their children, the wealth replacement concept can be used to create a charitable trust.

- **Life Estate Agreement**

You can donate your home to Mount Carmel. You may continue to live in your home but you are expected to be responsible for the upkeep of that home until your death or the time that you move into an apartment or other housing means. Upon your death or move into other housing, the home becomes the property of Mount Carmel.

- **A Bequest Through Your Will**

A well-planned will is the cornerstone of almost every estate plan. After providing for loved ones, you may decide to give a percentage of your estate or all of the remains to Mount Carmel Ministries. You can also safeguard against probate costs by having a will.

- **Charitable Gift Annuity**

A gift annuity can be established with cash or property. It will provide you with a guaranteed income for the rest of your life in exchange for the gift. A significant tax deduction can be taken for the year in which the gift was made and part of the income is excluded from taxes until you reach a certain age. Call our office for the current rates.

- **Charitable Remainder Trust or Unitrust**

Through a charitable trust, you can combine charitable giving with retirement financial goals. As the donor, you transfer property such as cash, stocks, farm or business into a trust. Income will be paid to you or your spouse for up to 20 years or for one or more persons' lifetime. The annual payment percentage would be between 5-7%, and the payment rate is set at the time you establish the trust. When the trust term ends, the property will become a gift to Mount Carmel Ministries. The trust will also bring you tax benefits.

As you can see, tremendous benefits can result from taking the time to carefully plan your gift giving to Mount Carmel Ministries and other favorite charities.

The ideas presented in this article are not rendering legal or tax advice, only educational information. If the ideas are of interest to you, you may wish to share this information with your attorney, financial advisor or contact our office at 1-800-793-4311.