



PAYING IT FORWARD

"I'd like to see you attend Swarthmore,' my great uncle told me when I was considering where to attend college. When I told him that my family could not afford it, my great uncle said that he would like to help make it possible. At several other points in my life, my great uncle and aunt were generous to me."

This was how the response began to my question over lunch, "How have you come to make this gift?" "Recently my widowed great aunt died," the donor explained, "So this is half of my tithe on the inheritance that I received. I gave the first part to the endowment fund of my parish. This half I would like to be used for Episcopal Charities and for the Diocese of California. I would like to carry forward the gift that my great uncle and great aunt have given to me."

When lunch was over we walked together to an investment brokerage office where the great uncle's and aunt's grand nephew deposited the stock certificates into the account of the charities for which they were intended. By giving the stock directly the donor avoided having to pay capital gains tax on the highly appreciated stock that he had substituted for the current shares that he had inherited.

"I want this gift to be used for endowment," the donor specified, "Because I want my great uncle and aunt's gift to me to keep on giving to others forever." By designating the gift for endowment, the principal will never be spent, but the annual income will be used to support ministry in perpetuity.

This grateful receiver of a gift became a grateful giver of a gift. For me, this experience inspired me to reflect on the instances of generosity that I have received and how I may be able to "pay it forward" both now and in my estate, through my will and trust.

Do you want to pay forward generosity that you have received? Where there is a will, there is a way.

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