



St. Thomas's News

Welcome to a brief update of news and topics of interest to members of the St. Thomas's faith community.

The Communications Team of St. Thomas's is happy to provide this printed update to those who may not be able to access our electronic communications channels.

February 2017



Chapter 22, Page 175 – Forward in Faith

"The place God calls you to be is the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet."

Wishful Thinking: A Theological ABC
by Frederick Buechner

"... and the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, **KINDNESS**, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things."
Galatians 5:22-23

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"But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love." 2 Peter 1:5-7

**"Kindness is the language which the deaf can hear and the blind can see."
Mark Twain**

Kindness seems to be in rare supply these days. Like that pearl of great price, I keep looking for kindness in myself and others much like that solitary figure sweeping the beach with a metal detector. The language of kindness is stilled, much too silent, a rare word spoken in our life and times.

*Our overly busy lives give us little time for kindness to ourselves, let alone others. We run and run and run, and then when we have run out of running fuel, we rage and rage and rage against ... what?? What is this rage about? Where is the kindness we seek to receive, the kindness we seek to give? In pondering this anomaly, I have been asking many over my days, **"Where can we find kindness now, and what might kindness look like now?"***

*One person from another community I share life with took to silence with my question. I was thinking, sadly, she would have no answer – or just get mad at me for asking! After a time, she emerged with this reply – **"I experience kindness in this way. I am in 15 item checkout line the grocery store behind a person with clearly more than 15 items. I know this because I have counted every item; however, I do not say anything to the person to***

**be NICE to them. I express
KINDNESS in the same situation; the
difference is I don't count!"**

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**"Carry out a random act of kindness,
with no expectation of reward, safe
in the knowledge that one day
someone might do the same for
you." Princess Diana**

Kindness is when I move ME out of the way for God to work THROUGH me toward others in the ways best for God's desire for others and for me. For some folks, this is as natural a way of living as taking breath. For me, it is still a work in process, as I still allow external circumstances or people to infuse my head and heart away from kindness. My frustration of not getting done what needs to be done because the lack of help of others stalls and hinders any process and progress – and for this, I can be not very kind. Perhaps I am cut off in the bobbing and weaving NASCAR style to survive I-95 driving, so I choose to respond in kind to that other person the same way – and for this, I can be not very kind AND very reckless with the plethora of handguns in place of many automobiles these days. Whenever I act out of this place, ME in front of God's desire for a better me, I am unkind to my own soul most of all.

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**"A single act of kindness throws out roots in all directions, and the roots spring up and make new trees."
Amelia Earhart**

*Anthony de Mello was director of the Sadhana Institute of Pastoral Counseling in India. In his last book of meditations before his death, **The Way of Love**, he*

*reflects on living lovingkindness as the way of **Love**:*

"It is with kindness as with happiness. It is not possible for you to say that you are happy because the moment you become conscious of your happiness you cease to be happy ... True happiness is uncaused ... It is unself-consciousness. Acting in kindness is never as good as when you have no consciousness that it is good – you are so much in love with kindness that you are unself-conscious about your goodness. So the first quality of kindness is unself-consciousness.

The second quality is it effortlessness. Effort can change behavior, it cannot change you ... Change is only brought about by awareness and understanding. Understand your attachments and they will vanish, the outcome is freedom. Love and freedom and kindness are not things that you can cultivate and produce ... all you can do is observe their opposites and [by changing you] cause these opposites to die.

The third quality of kindness is it cannot be desired. If you desire kindness you will be anxious to attain it [and more anxious when you do not attain it]. You will be in a constant state of dissatisfaction, and this will kill the very kindness you set out to be and become. Here is something to understand ... Your ego is a great technician. It cannot be creative. It goes for methods and techniques and produces so-called "righteous" people who are rigid, mechanical, lifeless, intolerant of themselves as they are of others ... You join the Creator not as a wily

technician, but when you are open to Love in you – no greed, no ambition, no anxiety, no sense of striving, gaining, arriving, attaining – kindness becomes you.” Excerpts from pp. 69-72

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“Wherever there is a human being, there is an opportunity for a kindness.” Lucius Annaeus Seneca

*So, what will KINDNESS look like now and onward ... in **YOU**?*

With gratefulness always, your servant in Christ

Fr. Paul+

175th Anniversary of St. thomas's

St. Thomas's Parish was first organized on August 1, 1842–175 years ago in 2017.

This year-long birthday party recognizes our enduring ministry in Newark and our warmth as a parish of faithful people.

Watch The Carpenter's Helper and website for further details as the celebration develops.

Please contact Nicole Cebula, Laura Greene, or Tom Fairchild to learn more about our plans and how you can help.

Ways to Stay in Touch

In addition to the Google group mail list, keep in touch via St. Thomas's website at stthomasparish.org or via St. Thomas's Facebook page. To join our Facebook community, you can go to our web site at stthomasparish.org and click the Facebook ("F") link at the top right, log on to Facebook and like us. You can also go directly to Facebook, search for St. Thomas's Episcopal Parish just be sure to click that you like us! The weekly Carpenter's Helper and sermons are published via all three avenues. Please share our mail list, website and Facebook page with others who wish to keep in touch with St. Thomas's Parish.

**St. Thomas's Episcopal Parish
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**Office Hours:
Monday - Thursday from 9:00 a.m. -
2:00 p.m.**