



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.

March 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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"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, Love your enemies ..." The Gospel lessons in February have centered on Jesus' Sermon on the Mount from Matthew chapters 5-7, the radical call to a living faith in God's ways and not our human derivations or self-negotiated ways of living our faith. While many of these But

*say to you teachings challenge us in our days, although we dismiss many of them for not being relevant to our complicated society and worldly norms now, Jesus words still ring very true as each one calls us to living the life of **GENEROSITY** that only can begin when it starts from **the inside out.***

"You give but little when you give of your possessions. It is when you give of yourself that you truly give."
Kahlil Gibran

Growing up on our family farm, the morning hours were the time to gather up the day's harvest of vegetables and fruits. After sorting time was completed, the trucks were off to deliver to the Campbell Soup and smaller grocery stores, we began filling the **Gratitude Basket**. In sorting, the rule was three items for market, one into the Gratitude Basket, continuing this pattern until complete. The Gratitude Baskets were places on a "Free As You Need" table by the roadside. This practice was started by my Grandad, the rule adhered to for all his sons and workers on the farm. Grandad always sat by the table, meeting and greeting those who stopped to take what they needed. They would chat about life and family, and anything else that might arise for his listening heart to hear. Nobody ever left empty handed or hearted from this time, most particularly my Grandad and me.

"If truth doesn't set you free, generosity of spirit will." Katerina Stoykova Klemer

Have you noticed how you feel when you give out of yourself for another? For me, I experience a **warm fullness of spirit**. Yet there are still those times when my generosity has **strings attached, the** expectation of the other to say thanks, or praise my good nature and wonderfulness, or ... I have heard it said, and have said myself, that **expectations become premeditated resentments**. I know how this feels because I have felt this in my less-than-generous moments.

"Generous leaders are servant leaders. They always come with open hands and an open heart."
Farshad Asl

On March 12, we gather as this community of faithful for the 175th time in our history. Over these 175 years, the mission and ministry of St. Thomas's Parish has flourished through the hands and hearts of YOU, the servant leaders of God. Over my years with you, I have consciously called those who serve as your Vestry, and those who serve in the many and varied way, as OUR servant leaders. We have moved, for the most part, from coming together on **committees** to serving in **ministries**, such as Stewardship, Worship, Christian Formation, Pastoral Care, Property and so on. It seems to just be words, but I find again and again, when serving a ministry, I am called **to serve and serve out of a greater generosity of self and spirit** that gives life to my work, and life abundantly. Like the athlete, we grow stronger living this way when it becomes the CORE of our being.

"What I consider true generosity: You give your all, and yet you always feel as if it costs you nothing."
Simone de Beauvoir

The prophet Zechariah reminds us this day, in a world very much divided by have's and have not's, "Thus says the LORD of hosts: Render true judgments, show generosity and mercy to one another" Living out of this spiritual place of **GENEROSITY**, the world in which you live and move and have your being will be a profoundly better place for those you serve, and for you,

"You give your all, and yet you always feel as if it costs you nothing."

With gratefulness always, your servant in Christ,
Fr. Paul+

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.

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