

What God want from us- "To do the humble work."

Today's gospel story in Luke is one of the more confusing stories Jesus shares with us his disciples. Theologians through the ages have offered many different interpretations of the message Jesus was leaving for us in the tale of the untrustworthy servant.

One that strikes me immediately is the challenge of the Master to the manager when he says to him:

"What is this, I hear about you- Prepare a full accounting of your management- we could easily substitute the word Stewardship for management."

It raises a question: What is it that God wants from us?

In my Tweet of the Week blog posting this week I included a quote from a writer who lived in the early part of the 1900's- Mr. Elbert Hubbard. Mr. Hubbard shares that:

"God will not be looking for diplomas and medals but scars."

I find this a powerful insight- Many of us spend our lives in search of honors and recognition we value. These are things of importance but the key is to understand that when we offer an accounting to God it is unlikely he will value these in the same way we do.

Mother Teresa took this quote and added to it:

At the end of life we will not be judged by how many diplomas we have received how much money we have made, how many great things we have done. We will be judged by 'I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat, I was naked, and you clothed me. I was homeless, and you took me in.' Hungry not only for bread – but hungry for love. Naked not only for clothing – but naked of human dignity and respect. Homeless not only for want of a home of bricks – but homeless because of rejection.

Many parishioners here at St. Patrick's understand and live according this teaching. Too all of you I want to say thank-you.

For those involved in our Sacraments and Worship ministries- who make the celebration of the Sunday Mass so meaningful- the lectors/ Ushers/ Musicians and Singers/ Eucharistic Ministers and Alter Servers a huge thank-you.

For those involved in our Servant Development Ministries- who lead bible studies, Instructional sessions for new Catholics, young people and families- thank you for the gifts you bring to our parish life.

For those that help St. Patrick's work as a parish, who provide support, the staff and the volunteers who run the place- we could not operate without your commitment.

For all of you who take the chance and are in service to and reaching out to those in our society many consider to be untouchable- unworthy of help or love- thank you.

At St. Pat's we have people who visit the sick and the elderly, comfort the grieving, share hope with those who are intellectually disabled, raise money for those in need.

Today there is another opportunity for all of us to get involved in the Service and Outreach life of St. Patrick's.

You heard at the beginning of Mass there will be the sign-up for the Out of the Cold program supported by the Social Justice Ministry and the Friends of Dismas Monday Community Dinner at the Keele Centre project.

Why is this important? Why should you care about people who live on the streets or are completing a sentence in a half-way house? Only you can answer these questions.

I will tell you however, from firsthand experience, that while your gift of a casserole or a dessert will not change the world, it will impact the lives of those Jesus tells us are our brothers and sisters.

There is just no way around it- How we care for the least, especially those we may judge to be unworthy of kindness, is what we will be called to account for when our time comes before our Master comes.

Why should you consider signing up for the program today? Let me tell you a story about my friend Allan.

I first met him five years ago when he came to the Keele Centre to complete his sentence. Allan was what you would call a talker. He came to our community dinner every time, he ate the food prepared by you the people of St. Patrick's and it was a feast for him.

For Allan it was about so much more than the food for him. He shared with me on many occasions how amazed he was that people would care enough to give to complete strangers.

What truly amazed him, was the fact that there were people who would come down to the Keele Centre and sit and eat with the men- with convicted criminals.

Then my friend got sick. He was diagnosed with cancer, and we watched him die. During this battle with cancer, a new volunteer came into Allan's life. She is a young woman who stands less than 5 feet while Allan is well over 6 feet tall. They were a sight to behold.

She visited Allan and was with him right up to his death and my friend Allan did not die alone.

Fr. Scott Lewis in his reflection this week in the Catholic Register cautions us to:

“Beware of too much of a quiet and peaceable life. It is far too easy to slip into a privatized form of religious practice that ignores both the demands of justice and the need to bring about constructive change by the name of God. “

Befriending a convicted criminal or serving dinner to the homeless is not for everyone. We all have different graces- if one of yours is that you can give of your time to cook a casserole and/or a dessert for a stranger then take a chance- risk getting a scar and visit us in the large hall to offer your gifts.

A final quote from Mother Teresa- my favorite:

Let us not be afraid to touch the dying, the poor, the lonely and the unwanted according to the graces we have received and let us not be ashamed or slow to do the humble work.

It would seem the answer to the question- What does God want from us? May well be to do his humble work.