Faith Formation Files: Vol. 2, Issue 16 January 26, 2020

In Matthew 22:39, we hear Jesus tell the Pharisees, “And the second resembles [the first great commandment]: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” How is it that we apply this directive in our lives? What are ways that you have loved your neighbor? There are personal actions that some of us have taken. Others participate in established programs and initiatives that benefit others. We are called to fill our own cup first, to take care of our own, (1 Timothy 5:8) but then to share with those less fortunate or without the same gifts that you have been given. What (more) can you do to live this Second Great Commandment?

Personal actions include many of the small things that we tend to do on a daily basis. We hold open the door to the building as we see another person approaching. We take the grocery cart back to the corral for the mom who is trying to load groceries and kids. We help someone at work who has dropped a stack of files or a tool that they’ll need to do their job. These seemingly small things are very simple to include in our daily activities but are huge to the receiver. Keep (or start) doing them! Other things that people may be doing on their own include giving a street peddler a blessing bag or some cash. Have you ever helped someone physically push their car off the road or to a gas station? What about doing yardwork or minor home repairs for an elderly or sick neighbor? Maybe you pay for someone else’s coffee or tank of gas? Have you ever been able to grace someone with a larger gift such as paying to have their propane tank filled, buying someone a reliable vehicle, or contributing to their schooling? As long as you are not creating a burden for yourself or your family, giving to others is a gift that benefits the giver just as much as the recipient. And it exemplifies living the Second Great Commandment, loving and taking care of others. It is often these types of giving that are shared on Facebook and give so many of us hope for humanity.

Others (and sometimes it is the same folks) participate in organized programs that are set up to help people. Our diocese runs several of these campaigns throughout the year: Catholic Services Appeal, World Mission Sunday, and Catholic Campaign for Human Development, among others. But not all the initiatives come from the diocese. Right now we have a fundraiser going on for Life Resources of Northern Michigan. We recently collected for the YDisciple group to attend Winter Jam 2020. (It was amazing! See our Facebook page for pictures or talk to one of the kids in the parish who attended.) Other things we can do that don’t involve giving money include working at our Fish Fry events or joining any of the Christian Service projects. (Right now they are prepping for the Indoor Garage Sale.) Have you volunteered at any of the Service Saturdays? These ways of loving our neighbor are also very valuable and often quite necessary. If you haven’t participated in any of these initiatives, please join in.

It is really not hard to live this commandment. You can do it! Chances are, if you do participate in any of these projects, you can do even more! As long as your own are taken care of, do what you can to help others.

This weekend our Faith Formation is the GIFT (Generations in Faith Together.) Join us in Fellowship Hall after the last Sunday Mass as we work together to plan for ways that we can live this commandment.

Blessings,

Julie Gould

faithformation@ctknsf.org