

TO BE READ FROM THE PULPIT ON DRF SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 23-24.

TODAY IS DISCIPLES RESPONSE FUND SUNDAY. THIS IS THE DAY BISHOP MEDLEY ASKS US TO SUPPORT THE GOOD WORKS OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH OF WESTERN KENTUCKY, BY CONTRIBUTING TO THE DISCIPLES RESPONSE FUND.

Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Every parent has heard their child complain that they aren't being fair. We're probably all guilty at some time or another of thinking that we're doing our share, but it's other people who aren't pulling their weight. In today's Gospel, Jesus challenges the notion of what it means to be generous and fair. He makes it very clear that God prioritizes generosity. It's a theme that creates as much controversy today as it did 2000 years ago. The key is figuring out how we can best live out God's generosity in our own lives.

The prophet Isaiah prepares us in the first reading that it will be difficult addressing issues with the mind of God. He states, "your ways are not my ways." In the second reading St. Paul tells the Philippians that he is caught between two worlds. But in his parable, Jesus clearly distinguishes the difference between the spiritual world from our human nature. Jesus calls us to a level of generosity that may be contrary to the logic of our natural instincts.

There are many ways to practice generosity. We can be generous in our words and actions, always seeking to build others up rather than tearing them down. We can be generous with mercy and forgiveness. We can share an abundance of hospitality to the strangers who are joining our communities. We can be unselfish in the time it takes to listen and understand the position of others. Jesus is speaking very directly to each one of us, challenging us to find more ways to be gracious and generous.

When Jesus challenges us, it's a lot easier to simplify the message by applying it to someone else. But Jesus is speaking to every single one of us very directly in this reading. Do we always prioritize God's version of generosity?

This is also the time of year when I join you as I challenge myself to be financially generous to the Disciple's Response Fund. This annual appeal supports shelters, schools, parishes, and many other ministries too numerous to mention. Please follow some of articles about these ministries in our Western Kentucky Catholic newspaper. Last year, over 4000 households throughout our 78 parishes gave generously, and I am very appreciative for every gift. It is my hope and prayer that we can continue to grow this financial generosity so that I can continue to expand our mission throughout the Catholic communities entrusted to my care.

Please continue your prayers for me and those in leadership who guide our church. Pray we are wise stewards of the dollars entrusted to us. Let us be open to the discerning power of the Holy Spirit as we prioritize dollars to feed, heal, house, educate and evangelize the people of western Kentucky. And I also want you to know that the written prayer intentions I receive are at the foot of the altar in the chapel at the McRaith Catholic Center. These intentions are prayed for each day by me and my staff. May God bless our efforts as we continue to try and do the work of Jesus Christ in our Diocese.

Bishop William Medley