

LENT

A SEASON OF REFLECTION,
RENEWAL, AND PREPARATION

FAST FOCUS | WEDNESDAY, MARCH 16, 2022

Mirror, Mirror on the Wall... Do I Re-present the Greatest One of All?

“So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.” ~Genesis 1:27 (NRSV)

When we look into the mirror, we see an image or reflection of ourselves. With the human eye, we can only see our God-given physical features and what we may consider as our perfections or imperfections. In the account of the Creation in Genesis 1, God took counsel with himself, as a part of the Trinity, to create humankind in their "own image." Thus, we are created in the "Imago Dei," fashioned to be a reflection of God in nature, character, and moral disposition.

Ash Wednesday marked the beginning of the season of Lent for Christians around the world. The forty days of Lent is a time of repentance and self-reflection as we seek a deeper intimacy with God - our Creator. To help us remain focused during these forty days, the church offers three pillars around which we concentrate our efforts: prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. While most Christians readily practice the disciplines of prayer and fasting, how many of us are purposed to engage in almsgiving?

Almsgiving (or charity) is an outward sign of Christian love toward others. It involves sacrifice on behalf of the giver in order to freely provide for the needs of others. Almsgiving is an act of sacrificial love - love put into action out of compassion with a desire to please God. Almsgiving can be extended in various ways, meeting the basic needs of others, not only financially but also physically and spiritually.

On last week, the local news reported an elderly woman who had been without electricity for five weeks. The wires connected to her home were severely damaged due to the ice storm in February. Within hours of the broadcast, numerous calls poured into the station from persons wanting to help this 85-year-old woman. On the following day, in an act of kindness, several brothers of a Masonic hall arrived early and worked tirelessly to make the repairs needed to restore the electrical power at no charge. Be it consciously or not, these men were actually practicing almsgiving, giving freely of themselves - their time, talent, and treasure.

God designed us to be conduits rather than hoarders, so that God's love and generosity might flow through us. One of the ways you can demonstrate your love for God is to be compassionate and caring towards those in need. Even the smallest gesture can mean a great deal.

God created us to live and work together in harmony for the sake of God's Kingdom. As God's image bearers, we are to re-present God by mirroring God's works and letting our lights shine wherever we go. For in doing so, we glorify God.

REFLECT: Reflect on Genesis 1:26-27 and Matthew 5:16. What is seen in your reflection?

REMEMBER: God initiated the concept of sacrificial giving when God gave His only Son. John 3:16 tells us, "For God so loved the world that He gave." Giving is not just a good idea; it is a God idea. Giving is at the heart of God's love. When we give to others, we reflect God's heart and image to others.

REQUEST: Dear God, I thank you and count it a privilege to be created in your image. I thank you for being the source of everything that I have or need. As you have so graciously provided for me, Lord, help me to share the bounty of your blessings with others with my time, talent, and treasure. Lord, it is my desire to live my life as a mirrored reflection of you. In Jesus Name, Amen.

Submitted by: Dr. Nadolyn Woody-Dunigan

