

MONDAY: Invitation to Help

Receive this Invitation:

For many months now I have felt helpless in being able to reach out to others. Six feet apart might as well have been 6 miles apart. Neighbors waving from windows, family members choosing to stay home, screen time rather than fellowship. Helpless.

But then I turned to being helpful. Can I get something from the grocery store for you? Can I choose to buy locally to support our friends? Gratuity tips got bigger but our lives still stayed smaller and further apart.

Now, I will choose to help in the name of Jesus. Not because it will make my life easier and I will receive accolades ... not because it will ease my conscience ... not because I can. I will choose to help in the name of Jesus because he has asked me to do just that. Sometimes, helping others is as simple as living an honest and faithful life. By living thoughtfully and honoring God with my words and actions, I may inspire someone to help themselves by doing the same.

(Nan Konze)

This Lenten season, as we prepare our hearts for Easter, we are invited to fill our lives where they may be empty. One way we can fill some of the emptiness is to serve others. Mark 10:45 says "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for so many." Daily acts of goodness in the name of Christ may be helping your family members with chores, small gifts of love (like flowers from the yard) or being kind and thoughtful. Other acts of goodness in the name of Christ may be helping the community - set aside one canned good each day for Wynnton Neighborhood Network or cleaning out one clothing item from your closet or chest of drawers for SafeHouse ministries. Or write a thank you note to someone in your life. Whatever you do for others, do it in the name of Christ. You'll be surprised how full your heart will be.

(Mary Lou Jarrell)

TUESDAY: Read, Reflect, Respond, and React

Read:

Read these passages of Scripture.

In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.

(Matthew 5:16, NLT)

Jesus sat down near the collection box in the Temple and watched as the crowds dropped in their money. Many rich people put in large amounts. Then a poor widow came and dropped in two small coins. Jesus called his disciples to him and said, "I tell you the truth, this poor widow has given more than all the others who are making contributions. For they gave a tiny part of their surplus, but she, poor as she is, has given everything she had to live on."

(Mark 12:41-44, NLT)

While Jesus was in the Temple, he watched the rich people dropping their gifts in the collection box. Then a poor widow came by and dropped in two small coins. "I tell you the truth," Jesus said, "this poor widow has given more than all the rest of them. For they have given a tiny part of their surplus, but she, poor as she is, has given everything she has."

(Luke 21:1-4, NLT)

Reflect:

Write your thoughts about this passage.

Respond:

Pray this prayer.

Blessed Father, you are above all in gifts, and out of your giving you have taught me the way to a fuller identification of myself with you. Not only your gift of Jesus and your gift of the Spirit, but every day your gifts are about me like manna in the wilderness. All I have belongs to you, and of my money I am only a trustee. Command its use as shall please you and give me the experience of the giver's joy. Let me see clearly the sin of covetousness and deepen my hatred of its practice. In the name of your unspeakable Gift be praise and dominion forever. Amen.

(Peter Ainslie)

React:

How will you do good in the Name of Christ today?

Respond:

Pray this prayer.

O Searcher of hearts, give to me a larger spiritual vision, that I may see myself with faultless eye, so that I may get away from every sin, and grant to me a spiritual consciousness so sensitive that I shall know that you are with me in my daily rounds when I am harassed and burdened and tempted. Set me to be a witness for you every day, and let me be contented to stand at whatever post you shall put me, and your presence shall be my consolation, and I shall give praise and thanksgiving to your Name when I shall awake in your likeness through the merits of your love and grace. Amen.

(Peter Ainslie)

React:

How will you do good in the Name of Christ today?

WEDNESDAY: Read, Reflect, Respond, and React

Read:

Read these passages of Scripture.

Again he said, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I am sending you."

(John 20:21, NLT)

And then he told them, "Go into all the world and preach the Good News to everyone. Anyone who believes and is baptized will be saved. But anyone who refuses to believe will be condemned."

(Mark 16:15-16, NLT)

Reflect:

Write your thoughts about this passage.

THURSDAY: Read, Reflect, Respond, and React

Read:

Read these passages of Scripture.

Then he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit."

(John 20:22, NLT)

Reflect:

Write your thoughts about this passage.

Respond:

Pray this prayer.

Breathe on me, Breath of God,
 Fill me with life anew,
 That I may love what Thou dost love,
 And do what Thou wouldst do.
 Breathe on me, Breath of God,
 Until my heart is pure,
 Until with Thee I will one will,
 To do and to endure.
 Breathe on me, Breath of God,
 Blend all my soul with Thine,
 Until this earthly part of me
 Glows with Thy fire Divine.
 Breathe on me, Breath of God,
 So shall I never die,
 But live with Thee the perfect life
 Of Thine eternity.

(Edwin Hatch)

React:

How will you do good in the Name of Christ today?

FRIDAY: Read, Reflect, Respond, and React

Read:

Read these passages of Scripture.

At that time the Roman emperor, Augustus, decreed that a census should be taken throughout the Roman Empire. (This was the first census taken when Quirinius was governor of Syria.) All returned to their own ancestral towns to register for this census. And because Joseph was a descendant of King David, he had to go to Bethlehem in Judea, David's ancient home. He traveled there from the village of Nazareth in Galilee. He took with him Mary, to whom he was engaged, who was now expecting a child. And while they were there, the time came for her baby to be born. She gave birth to her firstborn son. She wrapped him snugly in strips of cloth and laid him in

a manger, because there was no lodging available for them.

(Luke 2:1-7, NLT)

Reflect:

Write your thoughts about this passage.

Respond:

Pray this prayer.

I bless and give thanks to you, O Lord Jesus Christ, the Only begotten of the Father, born before all worlds, who, of your unspeakable condescension, did permit yourself to be born in a filthy stable, and for love of holy poverty, to be laid in a narrow manger.

O most gentle Jesus, who, that you might give to all men an example of a holy life, and the means of everlasting salvation, did will to be born of Mary the Virgin at the hour of midnight, grant that I may tread in the sacred footsteps of your humility and poverty! Grant that I may join, in giving praise and thanks to you, the angels and the whole company of the heavenly host, whom you caused to be the joyful heralds of your Nativity!

(Thomas à Kempis)

React:

How will you do good in the Name of Christ today?

SATURDAY: Read, Reflect, Respond, and React

Read:

Read these passages of Scripture.

In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.

(Matthew 5:16, NLT)

Even before he made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in his eyes.

(Ephesians 1:4, NLT)

Reflect:

Write your thoughts about this passage.

Respond:

Pray this prayer.

O heavenly Father, grant that we may bestow this day wholly in your service, so that all our thoughts, words, and deeds may redound to the glory of your Name and good example to all men, who, seeing our good works, may glorify you our heavenly Father. And since of your mere favor and love you have not only created us in your own similitude and likeness, but also have chosen us to be heirs with your dear Son Jesus Christ, of that immortal kingdom which you prepared for us before the beginning of the world, we ask you to increase our faith and knowledge, and to lighten our hearts with your Holy Spirit, so that we may in the meantime live in godly conversation and integrity of life.

(John Knox)

React:

How will you do good in the Name of Christ today?