

A Matter of the Heart
Partnering in the Generosity of God
November 22, 2020

Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. (Matthew 6.19-21)

Opening

Greet one another and agree on confidentiality and agree to practice sacred listening as everyone shares from their own unique experiences and sacred stories.

Time of Centering

Get comfortable in your seat with your feet flat on the floor with your hands laying on your lap letting go of tension throughout your body. Take a couple of slow, deep, cleansing breaths. Relax your jaw, face and shoulders. Take a few moments in silence to rest your mind and focus on your breath. It is the breath of God within you.

Bring to mind something you are grateful for and allow that gratitude to flow from your heart throughout your body as a prayer of blessing to God. Take a few moments to briefly share your gratitude with the group.

Spiritual Practice

Visio Divina facilitates a relationship with an image or subject, patiently being with it, receptive in mind and heart, perhaps even in dialogue with it. In stillness, we allow the image to reach beyond the intellect and into the unconscious level of our being, a place that can't be accessed directly. In wonder, we are invited to look at every aspect of an image and ponder it as an encounter with God. It is a way of seeing an aspect of ourselves in God at the non-verbal, heart level. The canvas then becomes alive with personal meaning meant just for us. This is the same movement of the Spirit we can experience with Lectio Divina and Scripture.

When practicing visio divina in a group, it's helpful for the facilitator to leave a long pause between each question, using an intuitive sense of the appropriate length for the pause. Since this is a new experience for many, some people have told me that it's helpful when the silences aren't *too* long because they may

start to feel lost. It's natural with this new way of praying to experience resistance or a sense of confusion: "I don't know how to do this!" Just trust the process as you would any other contemplative practice, knowing that by entering wholeheartedly into the experience you are saying yes to God's transformational presence.

Questions read by group leader as group members gaze at the image.

What stands out to you as you gaze at this image? *(Pause at least 2 minutes)* **Is the image revealing an observation or a prayer?** *(Pause at least 2 minutes)*



Message from Sunday's Sermon

Assign a number to each member, then take turns reading aloud.

1. "Faith is the reality of what we hope for, the proof of what we don't see." (Hebrews 11.1) Paul, tells us that God "...gives life to the dead and calls things that don't exist into existence." (Romans 4.17)
2. At times we want the faith we follow to be experiential and observable, or at least something we can feel. Yet, faith is based upon what God has revealed, "We live by faith and not by sight." (2 Corinthians 5.7)
3. Recapping our last two weeks of this three-part series, let us recall that God is a generous God, and we are called to be generous people.
4. People experience God's generosity in creation and life itself, in the bounty of earth and the spiritual gifts of love, grace and forgiveness.
5. God's gift/s to us creates a need in each of us to give back to God and others, as we become generous people. Generosity is at the core of our spiritual inheritance.
6. Generosity is an instrument of God's reconciliation and inclusion. Because generosity is God's antidote to the greed and hoarding that lead to scarcity, it is the means by which God brings forth the abundant life that Jesus promises.
7. Generosity is no less than the means by which God ushers in the Kingdom.

What has stood out for you in these lessons about God's generosity?

Do you have a memory of a generous act that you are willing to share with the group?

Do you sense an invitation in this message?

Action Step

You have used the spiritual practice of Visio Divina and considered that generosity is at the core of our spiritual inheritance. Out of your time together, and with

what you have shared with one another, consider one action step that you can take this week to put your faith into action. Take a moment to share your one step with your group.

Prayer

Lift the requests of the group members, as well as prayers that will assist you as you put your faith into action.

Crossroads Events

Sunday Evenings at the Labyrinth

Each Sunday through December 20, from 6–7pm, Crossroads is offering a time to walk the labyrinth. This is a time of deep reflection, of honoring our personal losses, (jobs, relationships, security), as well as our precious friends and family who have passed away. The labyrinth will be lighted with blue lights and hosts will be present to direct you as you step onto the path. The labyrinth is located on Crossroads property behind the fenced play area.

Register <https://www.crossroadsnova.org/labyrinth-on-sunday-evenings>

Annual Thanksgiving Day Run is Virtual!

Keep your tradition streak alive and run with us on Thanksgiving Day or sometime throughout the holiday weekend! You can do so from wherever you will be spending Thanksgiving!

Choose to join us at the traditional time and day - Thanksgiving Day, November 26 at 8:15 AM from your own front door and use our RaceJoy technology to "run together" with friends, and family! Or take advantage of the ability to sleep in on Thanksgiving and choose to run anytime through the holiday weekend. November 26 - November 29!

We know you struggle every year deciding if you should do the 10k, the 5k or the 2k, well this year, you can do them all! Choose to run our virtual Thanksgiving Feast challenge which offers ALL the distances! This challenge will have you working off your second (and third) helping in no time!

Register [here](#).

To live as Jesus lived is to understand that Jesus modeled the character of God. Generosity is at the core of our spiritual inheritance.