

I was telling my granddaughter the other day that a good portion of artistic skill lies in how you see things. I have an artistic eye, but because of my tremor, I don't do much with it anymore. However, it got me thinking there are other things that are so much in how we see things, like generosity.

For years I have been telling people when they are Church shopping that they shouldn't just look for a church that meets their needs but that they should consider looking for a church that needs them. Someone told me recently that the reason they decided to become a member of the church that they are a part of now is because it was doing so much for so many people that they knew there would be a place for them to help also.

People who are generous look around and see the needs that others might miss. When they are at church on Sunday morning, they see someone who looks sad and needs cheering up or someone who's sitting alone at coffee hour and would like to have someone with whom to chat.

When I see someone at the grocery store who is asking a clerk when she gets off because she looks tired, I know I am looking at a generous person. Too often we are rushing around and only feel our own tiredness or frustration, but a generous person sees the needs of others.

I have seen signs and bumper stickers that say, "Practice random acts of kindness", and that is a lovely sentiment, but first it requires us to see what would be a kindness to someone and then doing it.

Perhaps what generosity is really about is seeing things through the eyes of Christ. Then we can truly see who's hurting or hungry or tired or just in need of a kind word. It might even make us look even deeper and end up having us open our pocketbooks to those in need, because the more that we look around the more we will feel a part of this world and the people in it. It might be easier not to because seeing other's need can be tiring. Yet we have a source of energy that is boundless and can renew our strength because we know that same Christ that is seeing the need in others also sees what we need and provides it so that we can continue to be the generous people of God that we were created and redeemed to be.

My prayer for all of us this year is that we begin to see around us the way Christ sees and then are motivated to do something about whatever needs we see. But most of all, my prayer is that we will constantly be renewed in the love of God which is endless and everlasting. Amen