

Thanks and Giving

As the winter holiday season approaches let us pause and appreciate the many gifts in our lives and be reminded of the very best virtues of mankind. Let us venture to think of others more often than we might ordinarily do. May we begin and continue to extend a helping hand to those in need as we remember to give thanks for blessings in our own lives. For many blessed with good health, secure jobs, loving families, supportive friends, food to eat and a warm place to live, let us not take these things for granted.

Right here on Long Island there are many who are not so fortunate. How might we help to make a difference? There are thousands of individuals and families that are homeless here at home including: women with children and scores of service men and women who have fallen on hard times since returning from service to our country. Drug overdoses continue to take lives at never before seen levels. Across the country we continue to see examples of senseless violence, bigotry and hatred. There is escalating acrimony with individuals spewing hate and divisiveness. Have we forgotten or perhaps some have never learned the inherent worth and value of each human being just for being born? Each and every earthly soul is worthy and deserves to be treated with dignity and respect.

A recent television news piece indicated that 100,000 NYC school children are homeless at this present time. This is mind boggling! How is this even possible? Surely most of us can do something to help if not there than somewhere, at home on Long Island is a good choice. Locally some donate canned goods and other food items to help feed those that are hungry. Some of our neighbors will need warm clothing as the winter approaches especially coats, gloves and hats. There are many churches and other ministries that work to provide shelter nights and warm meals helping to feed and house those in need. Check in your own community to see how you might donate or be of service to others.

Despite hardships recognizing that life is filled with many blessings often helps to improve mood and motivate people to get out there and help make a difference. For those who believe they can't do something extraordinary we can all do ordinary things in extraordinary ways! Consider visiting seniors in nursing homes just to sit and chat or donate your time at a local not for profit human service organization or perhaps an animal shelter or consider donating pet items there as well. Make a donation to a local charity and support your own local merchants by shopping and spending more at home too.

It has been said that one of life's greatest gifts is to do a kind deed for someone else anonymously and then have it be found out by accident. It is a spiritual axiom that when you help someone else it is really you, the giver, who benefits most as the receiver of the spiritual rewards for doing the kind deed as the recipient benefits as well.

During this season of giving let us give thanks for the many blessings we have received and make a commitment to share similar gifts with someone who could benefit as well.

Happy Thanksgiving!