

SUNDAY BULLETIN

THINKING FAITH
GIVE

GIVING OF OURSELVES

Charity is interested in the whole person, not just a part. While we cannot be experts in every aspect of humanity, and while we should not lose sight of the importance of humility when discerning what we can and cannot do, a recognition that human needs are not only confined to material things is important. And those needs are present in the humans who support charity as well as those who receive it. This "holistic" approach can be a challenging one. It can lead us to ask questions of ourselves about the way in which we give. When

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to do so even when our charitable effort is simply making a donation. There are ways to make it personal if we wish it to be. Even the simple question of "how much?" can enable us to do that. C.S. Lewis, in his book *Mere Christianity*, wrote:

"I do not believe one can settle how much we ought to give. I am afraid the only safe rule is to give more than we can spare. In other words, if our expenditure on comforts, luxuries, amusements, etc., is up to the standard common among those with the same income as our own, we are probably giving away too little. If our charities do not at all pinch or hamper us, I should say they are too small. There ought to be things we should like to do and cannot do because our charitable expenditure excludes them."

ULTIMATE GIFT
Mother Teresa said it another way: "Give, but give until it hurts."

When people give of themselves to help us, when we can see them make some kind of sacrifice for our benefit, we know we are loved. And what a gift that is! One that begins to reflect, even dimly, the ultimate gift given to us by the Lord Jesus on Calvary.

Give: Charity and the Art of Living Generously by Magnus Macfarlane-Barrow is published by William Collins, £16.99 hardback



Mass text

ENTRANCE ANTIIPHON

O sing a new song to the Lord; sing to the Lord, all the earth. In his presence are majesty and splendour, strength and honour in his holy place.

FIRST READING: Jonah 3:1-5. 10

PSALM Psalm 24

RESPONSE **Lord, make me know your ways.**

1. Lord, make me know your ways. Lord, teach me your paths. Make me walk in your truth, and teach me: for you are God my saviour. **R.**

2. Remember your mercy, Lord, and the love you have shown from of old. In your love remember me, because of your goodness. O Lord. **R.**

3. The Lord is good and upright. He shows the path to those who stray, he guides the humble in the right path; he teaches his way to the poor. **R.**

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 7:29-31

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia! The kingdom of God is close at hand; believe the Good News. Alleluia!

GOSPEL Mark 1:14-20

COMMUNION ANTIIPHON

I am the light of the world, says the Lord; whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.

Next Sunday's Readings:

Deuteronomy 18:15-20

1 Corinthians 7:32-35

Mark 1:21-28



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Mother Teresa – now canonised as St Teresa of Calcutta – said: "There is more hunger for love and appreciation in this world than for bread," she was echoing the famous words of Jesus when he asserted that "One does not live by bread alone" (Matthew 4:4).

Of course, Mother Teresa was not suggesting that giving food to hungry people was unimportant – she who spent so much of her life doing just that knew that this is an essential activity for the Christian. Rather she was reminding us that the person in front of us is not only one with a stomach, but one with a mind, heart and soul too. Sometimes it is not enough to meet the material needs – to deliver the food off the back of the truck and leave, or to set up the standing order to our favourite charity and then forget about it (although both those acts of charity are very good too). There are much deeper human wants that can only be met by the giving of time – by listening and sometimes speaking, by expressing empathy and demonstrating solidarity. For some of us this is a much harder kind of charity than the fast-paced, problem-solving type. Not all of us, obviously, are called to be nurses, carers or religious spending hours each day spoon-feeding a malnourished child, or speaking words of love to the lonely person suffering from AIDS who has already lost all her or his children to the same disease. But we can all make time each day for those around us – our fellow parishioners, our neighbours and the lonely and vulnerable people of our communities. We can take opportunities, even if they are limited, to speak with them and get to know them – to make friends with them, even. And if we desire that – to give not just a material gift but to give of ourselves – we can find ways

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3RD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

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