

Every Perfect Gift



October 31 The Gift of Love in Action

When reading this week's Gospel I'm primed to expect confrontation of some sort. Given how Jesus was treated by religious leaders of the day, I expect a trap. However, the interaction with the scribe is entirely different. The scribe approaches Jesus with a sincere question, "Which commandment is the first of all?"

Jesus's response is a "drop the mic" kind of moment – boom – end of story! Not only did the scribe agree with Jesus's answer, but every faithful person hearing the response would have agreed as well, given that his reply was part of their affirmation of faith. Today, it's part of our Catechism and it is a call to action – "love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength and love your neighbor as you would yourself".

That "all-in" kind of love for God and agape love for our neighbor is foundational to our stewardship efforts. It requires faithfulness, inclusion and commitment to something bigger than self. We saw examples of this kind of agape love demonstrated during the pandemic in mask wearing, social distancing, and caring for the most vulnerable. All of those efforts were examples of love for our neighbor in action.

Pandemic life also illustrated the importance of faith and connection to - and care for- our neighbors. Additionally, the pandemic highlighted loneliness, inequities, and profound need in our world.

As we transition to post pandemic life, I pray that our eyes are opened and we acknowledge there is work to be done. Work that is core to both our Christian identity and philosophy of stewardship. Stewardship is the balm that allows our communities of faith to tend to a host of needs including loneliness, inequity, and need in our world.

Friends - we have work to do -- let's put our love into action! | tens.org

Lynn Farlin serves as Canon for Formation in the Southern Diocese of Virginia.



QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

How do the commandments to "love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength and love your neighbor as you would yourself" impact your stewardship choices?

In what ways is God calling you to care for your neighbor and your community?

