

Through almsgiving, we understand how privileged we are to share God's blessings, given to us for those in need.

Love ONE ANOTHER

BY: ARCHBISHOP JEROME E. LISTECKI



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April 18, 2023

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

It is usually the first week of the new year that those resolutions that we made with all sincerity are broken. This is the second Sunday of Easter, and although the Easter Season will continue, we have returned to our normal behavioral practices.

We followed the 40 days of Lent with prayer, fasting and almsgiving. It was also a time to give up something (mortification) that we enjoyed, demonstrating our solidarity with the Lord in His journey to Jerusalem. In my own life, I put the Cheetos aside, did not eat Twizzlers, and abstained from Freese's Pecan Turtles – the absolute best in candy for my palate. I also closed the iPad and did not play any word games, instead turning my attention to more spiritual reading.

Today, my fingers are orange from Cheetos, I munch on cherry flavored Twizzlers and have enjoyed a dozen or so pecan turtles from Freese's so far – all while using the iPad to play a couple of word games. It was important for my spiritual health to not only realize that I could do without, but also to do without intentionally for the Lord.

During this Lenten period, prayer also intensified. It is hard not to deepen our prayer life when we realize that the suffering of Jesus is for our sake, and His death is the way for us to life. Projecting ourselves into the text, we become part of the salvation story (*Lectio Divina*). Although we know the Paschal story, if we are honest with ourselves, would find ourselves conflicted just like the disciples – desiring Jesus to establish the earthly kingdom and confronting the Roman and Jewish authorities. This form of prayer has helped to rehabilitate our assessment of those who failed to stand with Jesus – their teacher and friend. It also assists in challenging us to stand for Jesus when He and His Church are criticized or condemned for the teachings that fashion our vision.

Almsgiving is the third characteristic of Lent. This year, we as an LOA community chose to charitably support the Blackfeet Reservation. Fr. Rod Ermatinger pastors the parishes of this reservation and depends on the contributions raised to serve the multiple needs of his congregation. Many of these Native Americans are baptized Catholics – our brothers and sisters in Christ. Every dollar we send will allow Fr. Rod to respond to the needs of the more than 12,000 individuals in his ecclesial communities, which cover over 3,000 square miles.

Through almsgiving, we understand how privileged we are to share God's blessings, given to us for those in need. We may never know the effect that our contributions have in demonstrating God's love, but we are confident that God will in separate ways return His love to those who are generous to His children in need.

I offer my thanks to those who have been generous in their almsgiving to this project. To date we have collected nearly \$33,948.46. Although our Lenten project has ended, those who still wish to contribute may do so by sending a check to the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, c/o Kim Kasten, P.O. Box 070912, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53207. Please write "Lenten Campaign" in the memo line.

I know that our prayers, fasting and almsgiving during the Lenten season reminded us of God's presence and His love for us. We offer our prayers now in Thanksgiving that God has seen fit to use us as examples of what it means to LOVE ONE ANOTHER.

Sincerely,

Most Reverend Jerome E. ListECKi
Archbishop of Milwaukee

