

Commentary on the Gospel for Thu, Aug 10th 2017

Feast of Saint Lawrence, deacon and martyr

Today's readings bring back fond memories of my father, Chuck, who would tell my three siblings and I that God loves a cheerful giver and a cheerful doer. This usually accompanied a request for various chores or jobs around the house and yard. We were instructed to say "Gladly, Dadly" when Dad asked us to pull weeds in the backyard or help wash the storm windows. And while we might not have loved to pull weeds or wash storm windows, the "Gladly, Dadly" always made us giggle.

The concept of giving cheerfully is important to think about. To give, not out of duty, or as just another thing on the to-do list. To give of yourself, your time, your treasure not begrudgingly, but recognizing that in giving, we do receive. I may not be able to make generous donations to my church or to those doing good works, but I can still give. I can give of myself. And giving of myself, of my time and my attention should be cheerful in all of my interactions, even if I am interrupted for the 10th time today when I would really just like to get a task finished.

In the gospel, Jesus tells us we will be asked to give much in following and serving him. The reward will be great, but there still must be the giving of ourselves. A prayer attributed to St. Ignatius of Loyola fits today and my goal to be a cheerful giver, to say "Gladly, Dadly" when I am asked to give and to give without the asking.

Lord Jesus, teach me to be generous;

teach me to serve you as you deserve,

to give and not to count the cost,

to fight and not to heed the wounds,

to toil and not to seek for rest,

to labor and not to seek reward,

except that of knowing that I do your will.

Amen.

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