

STEWARDSHIP RENEWAL – MAKING A DIFFERENCE

29 October 2017 [30th Sun. A Stewardship 3]

Most of us have people in our lives that we just do not like. There are people that annoy us, offend us, frighten us, upset us, make us uncomfortable. People that we do not want around us for one reason or the other. If you were asked to make a list of these people, who would be on it?

Thinking about that list helps make the point of how unexpected the response of Jesus is to the question, “Which commandment is the greatest?” (Matthew 22:34-40) The first part of his response that we are to love God with all our heart, mind and soul was to be expected. It is the next part that is the shocker. Jesus says that we are to love our neighbor as we love ourselves and that the whole law is based on these TWO commandments.

The people of Jesus time were familiar with both of the commandments. What is new is that Jesus made them both equally important. Previously, love of God was seen as the most important and love of neighbor was secondary. Jesus is teaching that you cannot say you love God and then not love your neighbor. Love of neighbor is proof that we mean it when we say we love God. In addition to all the people who are easy for us to love, neighbor includes all those on our lists of the undesirables, including our enemies.

The stewardship way of life calls us to make a difference in the world. As disciples and good stewards, we are to leave the world a better place because we were here. We do that by doing what Jesus asks us to do in the Gospel. We look at our lists of people who are easy for us to love and those who are difficult and attempt to love them all. We let the list beckon us to love more completely, more wholly.

These weeks of stewardship renewal have reminded us that following Jesus is about clothing our hearts with generous love. Living the mission of Jesus in the world calls us to live with a accountability to God and each other. In the week ahead, may we prayerfully discern what we will pledge next Sunday to support Christ Cathedral Parish as together we strive to truly make a difference in the world.

Together in faith,
Very Rev. Christopher Smith, Rector