

**Rev. Rebecca Blair /Sermon – Stewardship  
November 22, 2020**

A long time ago, I watched a segment on a Nightly News Program about a group of people who went around in a van handing out sandwiches to the homeless who were sitting around on park benches in some inner city park. The film crew filmed one of the volunteers walking up to a homeless person and offering him a sandwich. The man refused sandwich and told the volunteer to stop bothering him. The volunteer turned to camera and said, I don't blame him. If some stranger came bounding up to me while I was taking in the sunshine while sitting on a park bench and offered me a sandwich, I would refuse to take it – just like he did.

I was reminded of bit of TV when I was listening to Rabbi Jonathan Sacks on Krista Tippett's radio show. He remarked on the Great Commandment: ***Love the Lord your God with all your heart and all your mind and all your soul and love your neighbor as yourself*** by saying

***The one command reiterated more than any other is to love the stranger for you were once strangers in the land of Egypt. Or to put it in a contemporary way, love the stranger because, to him, you're a stranger.***

One of the ways we can look at today's Gospel is to acknowledge that the *least of these* in today's Gospel : *the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the sick and those in prison* are us. They are not people like us, they are us. It is just a matter of perspective.

So today, as we are, once again, not able to meet in person, today, as we wonder, once again, if we will still be the church we have always been once this pandemic lets loose its grip, we come face to face with ourselves.

We have just watched several clips of your fellow church members talking about what Trinity has meant to them and why they support Trinity with their pledge of financial support.

Trinity needs each of you to make a pledge of financial support.

There is a song they sing in New Orleans:

***Oh When the Saints go marching in  
When the Saints go marching in  
Oh, I want to be in that number  
When the Saints go marching in.***

We know that these are hard times. People who have never had to struggle, are struggling now. More people are hungry. More people are thirsty. More people are sick. More people feel lost and unmoored.

Now, more than ever we need to be the church. No more than ever we need to take care of each other. Now more than ever we need to love our neighbor as ourselves. Now more than ever, we need God in our lives and we need to share God's love with everyone around us.

God does not ask us to do what we cannot do. Trinity Church does not expect us to give what we do not have. But when the roll is called up yonder, we want to know that we have done our part.

Our reading from Paul's letter to the Ephesians contains a prayer:

*I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power.*

May God enlighten the eyes of our hearts so that we understand what God would have us to do and then give us the heart to give and work toward God's purposes.

Amen.