

For the Benefit of Others

I recently came across a quote of Pope Francis, which said: "We are born to help each other. No matter how difficult it is. Life is good when you are happy; but much better when others are happy because of you." What a great statement!

We try to make our family members happy, but what about others that we don't even know well? Do we make the effort to make others happy? When we serve people we don't know well, we aren't serving out of obligation or for any personal gain. We serve because of our genuine love for God and know that helping others is what God has created and enabled us to do.



The same day I read the Pope Francis' quote, I also read this: "The love of Christ compels us to use whatever gifts we have received for the benefit of others" (from Portals of Prayer, 3rd quarter 2021). I couldn't help but notice there is no comma between the word "received" and the words "for the benefit of others." My conclusion is that God gives us gifts to share, not to hoard, and not just for our own use. And, God places us where we can share those gifts with people in need.

What happens when we try to make others happy through the use of God's gifts? It is in sharing those gifts with others that we *do* make people happy. A result is it may be the catalyst for a chain reaction, motivating others to do good things for someone else. *Happy are generous people, because they give some of their food to the poor" (Proverbs 22:9).* Our kind actions can cause a change in their heart – and ours, too. "In this way, we demonstrate Christ-like servanthood and practice good stewardship over God's provisions ... When we abide in Christ, we can respond by doing good things." (Portals of Prayer).

I think there is a strong connection between these quotes. When we model Christ-like behavior, we encourage others to do the same. The result is that we may win souls for Christ. *In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven (Matthew 5:16).* If the sharing of our gifts opens someone's heart to Jesus, it is for the eternal benefit of others. Others are happy people because of you – perhaps in this world and the next.

Question: What can you do to make others happy, shining God's light and glorifying your Father in Heaven?

Prayer: Dear Lord. You have given us so much, not to enrich us, but to enable us to provide a benefit for others. Because of our faith, let us share and help others. Amen.