

Lenten Reflection Week 3

Week Three... Recognize, Respond, Love

Contribute to the needs of the saints, practice hospitality. —Romans 12:13



We are excited to have one of our state-side partners that we work closely with at Food for the Poor, Delane Bailey-Herd, share with us this week...

The Lenten season encourages us to enter a time of deep reflection of who we are, our obedience to the active presence of Christ within us, and who He calls us to be. He calls us to himself, to look like him, bear His image and recognize that He empowers us to carry out “Holy Tasks” as a response to love.

The verse *“Contribute to the needs of the saints, practice hospitality”* draws us to a visible, outward expression from an inner communion and relationship with God. The previous four verses set the precedence for us to demonstrate Christian living as a follower of Jesus. Verse 13 cannot truly happen if the instructions from the other verses are not in place. Verse 13 enacted highlights the fact that the other verses are a reality.

The first step towards carrying out this directive is having the ability to recognize the need and then through a practical, intentional, and tangible demonstration of love, we contribute to that need. We are also directed that while we are giving to the needs, we are encouraged to practice hospitality: *work on being better at loving, caring, honoring, and showing forgiveness*. With this extension, we could be entertaining angels unaware.

On a visit to a very remote Haitian village, a community not visited by many, we could hardly imagine that life still happened there. As we walked, we encountered a woman sitting under a tree with what looked like a scarf. A scarf? No, not in Haiti’s heat. A closer look revealed with head hung down, that she bore the weight and shame of a mass in her neck. The mass stigmatized her in the community as having a demonic possession, so she mainly stayed indoors. Our lowered posture met her where she sat, barely looking up. We introduced ourselves and asked permission to bring her help. The details were worked out and within 3 months she was cleared for surgery. The mass was removed, she returned to her family and community with dignity restored— a lifted head, a restored spirit, and answers to years of prayers! A testament of God’s love at work and obedience to contribute to the needs of the saints.



—Delane Bailey-Herd, *Senior Field Advisor at Food For The Poor, Inc. in Coconut Creek, FL*

Prayer for this Week:

Our Father, thank you for making us aware of the needs of your children and for unearthing solutions so that your purpose in our lives can be fulfilled. Forgive us where we have been made aware of needs, and we have failed to respond. You have equipped and raised up friends like the South Florida Haiti Project, to help restore dignity, bring peace, and hope to your children. For every vision, please make provision. We believe in and come alongside the plans you have for the community and residents of Bondeau, Haiti bringing more good to come out of Bondeau. Help us to realize that our generosity does not stop with the individual, but love is a gift that goes on. We take hold of the opportunities you give us to serve, love, and be your hands and feet starting now. Help us your children to contribute to the needs of the saints there, seize the opportunity you have given us to be your hands and feet while as hope-dealers, and maximize those “Holy Tasks” to practice hospitality. Amen.