

Deacon's Musings
By Steve Owen

Tis the season to be giving. The clang of Salvation Army Kettle bells meets us in front of nearly every store. Appeals from the media ask for donations of coats for kids and food for the hungry. Even tough Marines soften up this time of year and ask for toys for tots. In our parish hall and in the Narthex are giving trees with cards requesting pajamas and toys for women and children who are spending the holidays at Care Lodge due to abuse in their families. The Mediator Food Pantry makes its greatest appeal during this season, asking for items to fill food boxes because the economy is down and times are tough.

I don't know about you, but sometimes all these appeals are overwhelming. I find myself reacting negatively by guarding my pocketbook with a very unchristian Scroogeian "Baaaaa humbug!"

Then, in the quiet of Advent—this holy time of waiting—I never fail to hear over the din of appeals, a tiny voice that reminds me God has given me so much. In light of God's ultimate gift, just like when old Ebenezer sees the light and opens his heart's purse to the needs of those around him, I begin to realize there is a new way to live that is guided by our giving God: A God who understands we can't give to every need, but we can open our hearts to the Spirit that teaches us how to give with the same grace given to each and every one of us.

If you are looking for places to give during Advent, here is a list of charities we at the Church of the Mediator support:

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| 1. Pajama & Toy Trees—For residents of Care Lodge. |
| 2. The Haiti Fund—For building a school in an earthquake-ravaged area of Haiti. |
| 3. Camp Bratton-Green Scholarship Fund—For those who need assistance with summer camp fees. |
| 4. Mediator Food Pantry—Given by priest and deacon as needs arise. |
| 5. Old Rags and Blankets for Injured Animals— Yes, even your old throwaway rags, towels and blankets can be used for sleeping mats for injured animals. Call Lowell Hummer (a member at St. Paul's) at 601-693-3375 or call me to pick them up for Lowell. |

ESTIMATED GIVING STATEMENTS

Because we have had a number of calls asking for Estimated Giving balances, statements will be mailed this week to anyone who has an outstanding balance. Those of you who have already given the amount you designated, will not receive a statement; year-end statements will be mailed the first week of January. Our financial position at the end of November was \$12,000 more expenses than receipts for the year; needless to say, the church can use your help this month in order to end the year in a positive position. Please let us know if you think you will need to adjust the amount you estimated you would be contributing this year. If you have not turned in your Estimated Giving card for 2012 and wish to be included, again you can call me or the office and give us an amount. This would help the finance committee to have a more accurate figure on which to base our 2012 budget. Thank you for your help.

Alice James, Treasurer
Suzanne Todd, Bookkeeper

