

AM I SERVING OR BEING SERVED

When I was in the hospital a couple weeks ago, I was told not to bend my right wrist. I asked them for a splint but in that whole hospital there was not a splint available, and it had to be ordered. Because the doctor had taken me off the medication, I have taken for years for an essential tremor in my left hand it was shaking. They brought my supper tray. It was Salmon and vegetables and various accompaniments. I had difficulty picking up food with my right hand without bending my wrist and when I tried with my left hand, I threw food all over the tray. I have a lot of pride and I did not want to call for help eating. I mean how mortifying is that? So, I did the best I could. The next morning, I had ordered oatmeal and a muffin and hot tea. That was a bit easier for me to handle as I was doing a bit better using my left hand. As I was getting ready to eat one of the kitchen staff came in and gruffly said to me, "Are you going to eat all of that?" I was a bit shocked that she would speak in such a manner to a patient and simply replied, "Well, I hope so." She left. I thought where did that come from? Then it dawned on me she had picked up my tray from the evening before and was probably angry at the food I left. I know there are children starving in Africa, but I felt I had done the best I could. She was supposed to be serving me and I guess I failed in my part of the bargain which evidently was to eat everything on my tray. I was not to see her again and I was glad. I found her rude and demeaning. I find that as I have gotten older, people who are there to serve you whether cashiers, waitstaff, or clerks can sometimes be very rude no matter how nice you are. I recently lost my cane. I have a habit of walking off feeling fine and suddenly realizing I have no cane. I had only been to two places, a restaurant where I was parked 12 feet from the door and Kroger Supermarket. I called the restaurant they said they did not have any canes. I had given up and bought another cane in fact two. I was in Kroger just to pick up a prescription (just what I need, another pill) and decided to check the customer service desk anyway. The clerk looked at me and said, sighing, "I have 5 of them." I wanted to explain that when you park in the handicapped area and there are no carts available you use your cane to enter the store where you put your cane in the cart and use the cart as a walker. Then you accidentally leave the cane in the cart when you leave. I thought that this was what I had possibly done and indeed I had done exactly that. I wanted to explain old people to him but there was a line behind me, so I just felt someday if he is lucky, he'll understand. While I don't do the things I once did I feel God is still calling me to serve. I do what I can. Am I being served? In so many ways. I am served in the message on Sunday, the phone calls and text messages during the week, the meetings that make me feel like I am contributing. Granted, I don't do the things that I want to do, but I am pleased and thrilled at those who take my place. The one who stepped up for quilting has touched my heart, the ones doing a Bible study I sat up and then asked others to lead blessed me with their willingness to give of their time and selves, years ago I gave up communion when my tremor tried to throw the basket of bread all over the sanctuary, a wonderful giving person took it over. I am becoming acquainted with doing and giving things up. It is the way life works. God has blessed me with the serving and being served.

1 Corinthians 12:27 Now you are the body of Christ and each one of you is a part of it. And God has appointed first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, also those having gifts of healing, those able to help others, those with gifts of administration, and those speaking in different kinds of tongues.

1 Corinthians 13:1 And now I show you the most excellent way. If I speak in the tongues of men and angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal.

Lord, we thank you for this day and for the warmth of homes filled with love, for the food on our tables and the bounty we enjoy. Let us remember those this Advent season who are struggling and let us give of our gifts and ourselves to help them. Be with those who serve the hungry, the homeless, those who are struggling bless them and guide them. Be with those who are ill and those who grieve for those gone before us. Be with our Pastor and bless his ministry. Be with his family. Be with our staff and leaders guide them as they serve our church. Be with those who are suffering in Ukraine, grant them courage and safety, guide and protect them. Be with those in Haiti who are suffering. Be with our church may we remember that we are all children of God. Guide us as we seek to serve each other and our community. In Jesus name we pray. Amen

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