

Commentary on the Gospel for Tue, Sep 16th 2014

Early in my career I moved to Minneapolis, Minnesota for an interesting job and a chance to be a bit closer to family. I spent my first summer exploring the city and enjoying the beautiful lakes. During my first week of exploration, I saw a sign in my new neighborhood pointing to a Catholic church, so naturally I decided to check it out. I found a warm, welcoming community devoted to social justice and urban ministry. As I became settled in my new parish, I felt called to become actively involved. Yet, I struggled with what I could contribute. For example, while I had great empathy for the mission of the urban ministry, I could not see myself working an overnight shift in the shelter.

During my evening walks around the lakes I would pray for guidance. One day, I realized that the amazing work being done by my parish required effective administration, and I had management and office skills that might be helpful. And indeed, by helping in the office, I supported the urban ministry of my parish. I learned there are all kinds of ways to serve and it is important to reflect upon my gifts and share them where they are best needed.

This early experience of discernment came to me in my prayer about today's reading from Paul's first letter to the Corinthians in which we hear the familiar passage: "Now the body is not a single part, but many." And while we see in Luke's gospel today that Jesus embodies all of the parts - including prophet, teacher, healer - we the baptized have our special roles to fulfill. And, I believe we have an obligation to use our gifts in the service of the one body. We also need to be encouraging and accepting of the gifts of others, so we thrive as one body. I am grateful for the countless ways I have been encouraged and invited and supported by members of my parish faith community and community at large.

As I pray to strive eagerly for the greatest spiritual gifts, as we read in Corinthians, I ask these questions: What can I do to become more aware of and develop my gifts? How can I better share the gifts I have been given? What do I do to encourage others to share their gifts? How, as a member of my parish, do I help our community praise God in all of our actions?

Sing joyfully to the Lord all you lands; serve the Lord with gladness; come before Him with joyful song.

Mary Lee Brock - Creighton University Student