

December 4, 2016

MINUTE FOR MISSION - GIVING COURAGE

Good morning everyone.

In our culture today, most people think of courage as one of those virtues that belong to soldiers, athletes or adventurers - something that is displayed in battle, or on the playing field, or at the peak of the tallest mountain...in other words, wherever endurance, grit and determination are present in the face of physical challenges. All true.

The courage that I want to talk about today, is the sort of courage that is demonstrated in daily life. There are times when, "merely to live is itself an act of courage"¹. Ordinary life often evokes more extraordinary examples of courage than combat or mountain climbing. In this community of faith, in this region, this province, this country and around the world, there are people whose daily life includes grief, illness, disappointment, pain, struggle, poverty, loss, terror, and heartache. I know that most of us have experienced some of those challenges.

Can you imagine living a life that demands endurance, bravery and courage...day after day? I know that some of you can imagine it, because you live that life. In our world, there are hundreds of thousands of people living in those conditions every day, with the only promise being that much will have to be endured before any form of relief can come.

I have spoken to you previously about how a donation to the Mission & Service Fund is a gift of **hope** for those in need. This Advent, I want to add **courage** to that gift - courage for every person touched by the Mission & Service Fund around the world. Think of the message your donation will send to people who are afraid, who are hungry and thirsty, who are oppressed or wrongfully imprisoned, who are without education and job skills, who are without a home or a safe place to sleep...all of whom have to wake every morning and find the courage to carry on as best they can.

This season, as you reflect on the many gifts that God has brought to you, think also about making a donation to the Mission & Service Fund. It's a gift that will let others know this season, and every day, that they are not alone.

Thank you for your faithful support to Mission & Service.

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¹ Seneca, in his letter to Lucilius