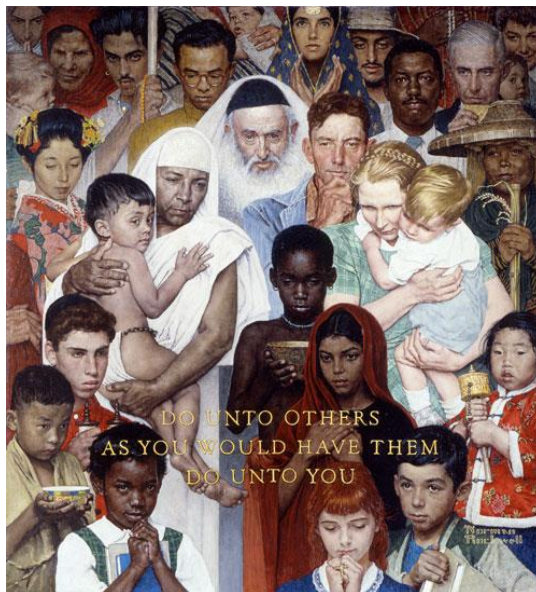


Patterns of Grace and Gratitude Week 5

Sunday, May 23 Pentecost



Artistic Credit: Norman Rockwell (1961). "Golden Rule"

*Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened. "Which of you, if your son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him! So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets. **Matthew 7:7-12***

Today ends our Patterns of Grace and Gratitude devotional series. Today is Pentecost which is traditionally recognized as the beginning of "The Church universal". It is the recognition that on the day of the Jewish celebration of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came upon the Disciples who were gathered together. The sound of a mighty wind from heaven came through that place and got their attention. And then they saw what looked like tongues of fire that came to rest on each of them as they were filled with the Holy Spirit.

The many folks who were in Jerusalem for the celebration of Pentecost also heard the loud noise coming from heaven and out of that sound they heard their own language being spoken by the disciples. They were confused and perplexed and asked, "What does this mean?" It was off-putting to hear Galileans speaking the language of someone else. It was as if the Spirit had given the ability to communicate with folks who are different and bring a word of hope to them. The Spirit gifts all of us with things that will help the whole community. Not just for our own benefit.

But it can be disconcerting to hear someone give a word of hope directly to us in the language we speak, when we thought those people were different, or "other", or not like us. We must be willing to use the gifts the Spirit gives us to help the world around us. And we must be humble enough to receive the grace and love that others extend to us, even when it perplexes us.

Patterns of Grace and Gratitude Week 5

Where is the wind of the Spirit blowing in your life today? What gifts do you have that you can share with the world to make it a more loving, grace-filled place? Go in peace.