

# Learn by Doing

## **Choice** Live Generously

The laborers who worked a full day counted the cost of their work and complained that their reward was unjust. We sometimes have similar feelings, expecting praise, payment or other advantages from our efforts. The Lord encourages us to give generously, without counting the cost. Explore the topic of generosity and practice being generous by doing a service project.



1. What is the first thing that comes to mind when you hear the word “generous”?
2. What characteristics do you associate with generous people? (e.g. generous people ask “What can I do for you?”. They are positive, optimistic, leaders, fun to be around, etc.)
3. The Writings describe people who are motivated by love for the Lord and for others. Their qualities are like people we would describe as “generous.” The prayer of St. Ignatius expresses the attitudes we need to embrace in order to live generously:

Teach us, good Lord,  
To serve You as You deserve;  
To give and not to count the cost;  
To fight and not to heed the wounds;  
To toil and not to seek for rest;  
To labor and not to ask for any reward,  
Save that of knowing that we do Your will.

4. Choose a service activity to practice generosity from the list provided on *Live Generously Activities* (p. 2).

### Materials Needed

Materials will vary depending on the service project you choose from the *Live Generously Activities* p. 7

### Prepare in Advance

Coordinate with others in your congregation as needed, e.g. if singing, cleaning, gardening

### New Church Concept First Will Be Last

People who place merit in their actions wish to be saved not because of the Lord’s righteousness, but because of their own. Some like this, at their death, say they have worked in the Lord’s vineyard, but they have continually had in mind their own superiority, glory and gain and thought that they might become the greatest in heaven. They have no mutual love, in which heaven consists, but only love of self, and they do not know what heaven is. They wish to be first, but become last. See *Arcana Coelestia* 2027

# Live Generously Activities

Choose a service activity to do with your group to practice living generously.

## Serve the Church

1. **Prepare a song to sing** at the close of church—either a familiar hymn, or a new round or song. Ask an usher to let you know when it is time to sing.
2. **Beautify your church grounds.** Sweep, rake leaves, mulch, plant flowers or bulbs. Clean up an outdoor area that can be used for a church service or for groups to gather.
3. **Tackle a once-a-year deep cleaning job** such as washing windows, wiping baseboards, wiping light switch plates, cleaning the church kitchen or nursery, or organizing Sunday school supplies.
4. **Repair** broken toys, nursery books, etc.

## Cook for Others

1. **Prepare soup** for a family in need. Some soups can be frozen and thawed later when needed. This is great for a family with a new baby, or with sick or elderly family members.
2. **Bake for your congregation.** Use a mix that can bake during church. (You may want to start your commute by mixing this and getting it into the oven and have your reading discussion while it bakes.) Serve after church.
3. **Prepare snack foods.** If your congregation serves snacks after church have students set up, serve and clean up. Teach them where to find supplies, how to make coffee and tea, and how to clean up.

## Reach Outwards

1. **Record a message or make a video** to send to someone who is shut in. Think about what might cheer them up and aim to lift their spirits. Consider including a song.
2. **Make cards** for your church's care team to send out as needed *or* make and write cards for a specific person or family in need.
3. **Assemble "Blessing Bags"** for people in need. Fill closable bags with new supplies such as toothpaste, shampoo, hairbrush, socks, gloves, etc. that can be dropped off at a shelter.
4. **Distribute holiday boxes that can be filled** for an organization such as the Samaritan's Purse. Go to [samaritanspurse.org/what-we-do/operation-christmas-child/](https://www.samaritanspurse.org/what-we-do/operation-christmas-child/) for more information.