

FEAST OF ST. FRANCIS

Taking in the small things

ELIZABETH SELZER

I want a new toy. Can I have that? I want that car. I want a bigger house. There are so many wants in this life. The competition to have more, bigger, better things is suffocating us all.

I have a 7-year-old son in first grade. He exists with his 7-year-old lens on the world, and there is no judgment. There is no knowledge of bigger or better. If I could stop time and keep it this way for him, allow for him to remain blissfully unaware of what it means to have and have-not... There is, however, a desire, every time we enter Target, to ask if we can “look” at the toys.

When we visit Target, we are usually there with a specific list. (Who can go to Target without a specific list and not leave there without \$300 worth of nothing?) If we have extra time, I love letting my son look at the toys. Watching him inspect toys on each aisle is fascinating to me. He reads descriptions of each toy, looks at pictures, fiddles with things that can be fiddled, and thoughtfully inspects ... each. and. every. toy.

At the conclusion of this inspection, he will take me back to see his top three and ask if I can take a picture for it to be on his birthday-Christmas-just-because-list.

This thoughtful process my son undertakes relies on patience (mine) and interest (his). In

these moments we are not rushed, but are instead just passing time, as it were.

When I think of St. Francis, I become a little numb in thinking of the reality of living such a simple life, but I become intrigued by the stories of his ability to delight in small things. We all know St. Francis as the patron saint of animals

For reflection...

- When was the last time you relaxed and simply observed how a loved one did something that was important to them?
- Are you being a steward of your time?
- How do you make time to connect with the simple things – are they moments in nature, the way your child, spouse, or pet looks at you?

and a man who lived with very little. However, he went from a man born into a wealthy family to a man who we know and remember as someone who lived very simply. His words and teaching are used for lessons on wants vs. needs, as well as praising the Lord for all creatures of the Earth and the Earth itself.

God equips us with the ability to need only a few things to survive. Taking just one of those – air – and providing yourself some space to breathe and take in moments you might otherwise miss makes you a better steward of time, talent, and treasure.

JOURNEY TO GENEROSITY



Elizabeth Luhn Selzer is a cradle Episcopalian serving on the vestry of St. Michael and All Angels Episcopal Church in Dallas. When not spending time with her husband of 20 years, and their 7-year old son, Elizabeth is hard at work raising money for Texas Ballet Theater, a resident company in both Fort Worth and Dallas. Elizabeth's two-decade fundraising career began when she was a student at Hollins University.

PARISH NAME

address | phone | website