



# WONDER IN ALL

## Stretching to Cheerful

*a reflection by  
the Rt. Rev. Robert W. Ihloff*

**I** was stingy with money, but very generous in sharing my time and talents. I did not give money to important causes cheerfully but out of a sense of duty. It was an inconsistency in my being which adversely affected my spirituality.

I was confronted with this inconsistency some years ago. Suddenly I realized that sharing my talents and my time brought me great joy; could sharing my money do the same? I realized that I enjoyed investing time and talent in the things I really believed were important. Could I invest my money with greater abandon and find enjoyment in so doing? Of course, and I did! I became a "cheerful giver."

I began to think seriously about thanksgiving. I realized that all my giving was in response to God's love, in thanksgiving for my many blessings. I could never repay God for all the blessings I have received, but the more I stretched in giving, the more joy filled my life. I began to think of my giving of

money as investing a percent of my income. What percent would make me a cheerful giver? I have been a lot more whole and happy since I realized this healing.

Yes, I had had a deadly spiritual disease, one which manifested itself in me departmentalizing my being, preventing me from being whole. Like the leper in the story, I return again and again to give thanks and to GIVE of all I have.

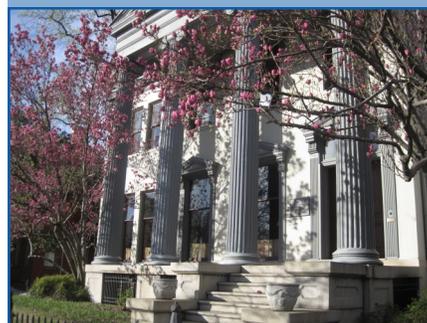


**The Rt. Rev. Bob Ihloff serves as Bishop Associate. He previously served as the Bishop of Maryland from 1995—2007. Bishop Bob is a voracious reader and opera lover. A life-long gardener, over the years he has cultivated more than 150 varieties of 19th century English roses.**

**October 13, 2019**

**Proper 23**

**Luke 17:11-19**



**Mayo Memorial Church House  
The Episcopal Diocese of Virginia**

## Reflection Questions

1. How have you departmentalized God's calls to you?
2. How have you answered God's call to be 'stretchy' in offering your gifts?
3. Where do you experience inconsistencies in sharing your gifts?
4. Have you experienced a moment of pivot when you felt more whole in your life of faith?

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