

Dear Friends,

Our children have so much to teach us. I like to think that authentic adulthood entails a willingness to learn what it means to grow up, even if that means children are our teachers. Please take a look at the bulletin board in the lobby this weekend with the beautiful artwork and the essay from Rosemary Sanders (which is printed with permission on the other side of my letter).

God's creation truly is our gift, but we have to be responsible for it. Think about this. When someone gives us a gift, we know we have to be thankful and at least express a word of gratitude for that gift. Anyone who refuses to say "thank you" does not care about the relationship between himself or herself, and the giver of the gift. When something is given, then, there needs to be some kind of a response. It is just wrong to ignore a gift that is given.

What kind of response do we show to God who gives without ever asking for anything in return? Do we say thank you for the gift that is given and leave it at that? "Thanks for the gift of my faith, Jesus; it's a real nice gift. Here, let's put it up on a shelf and leave it there. If I ever need it, I will take it down and put it to good use."

"Thanks for the gift of all I have in this life; I'm going to use it so that I can be happy in this life. My life is your gift to me, God, and I am going to use it for myself. Yes, I could help the poor more than I do, but I must take care of my needs."

"Thanks for the gift of time, God. There's not nearly enough of it. There's no time for prayer; there's no time for Mass; I get so little time off, I need that little sliver for myself.

Would we be satisfied with our children if they gave us the same responses we often times give to God? The youth of our parish are reminding us that no matter how old we are, we are God's children and that is what we will be for eternity. I am so proud of the kids in our parish, for the work they have done and for the lessons they teach us about our relationships with our families, our friends, the world, the Church – and most of all, the God who loves us forever and ever.

In joyful hope,
Fr. Tim Seigel