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Monday of Lent Week 2

Give, and there will be gifts for you: a full measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over, will be poured into your lap; because the amount you measure out is the amount you will be given back.? (Lk 6:37).

The first stage of giving (one of our Lent practices) is to suspend taking ? or at least taking for granted. It often surprises me to be made aware of how much I take for granted; how much I benefit from the generosity of others without feeling the genuine gratitude that comes from being surprised and from a (non-self-rejecting) sense of one?s own unworthiness.
When that happens a real measure of gratitude is felt. Then, after gratitude for this or that, we are filled with simple thankfulness for what is ? which is actually a state of pure consciousness, a taste of pure prayer.

It is better to be convinced that one is ?worthy? through receiving the generosity of others than to feel that it is our right to receive it. But the ego is trickier than that most of the time. And so we muddle through daily life with an often low level awareness of our true relationship others and with a slightly hypocritical humility.

The words of Jesus above deny us that option for muddle and self-deception. We implement them when we meditate and in the other ways, supported by meditation, by which we take the attention off ourselves and put it on others. Note the tone ? not a moralistic one: you must do this or that. But a revelatory one: this is how it is and, if you can see what?s there, you can see how this follows that.

Today?s message about giving, frankly expresses the element of self-interest that attracts us ? be a giver and you are more likely to receive gifts. That is borne out in daily life - in the medium- and long-term anyway. But beyond self-interest there is, in this teaching, a glimpse of the horizon of the nature of absolute reality. At first it looks like a kind of radiant, misty

spray. As we get closer the great waterfall of creating love emerges, always flowing in the same direction, that is the Trinity.

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