

## **Lenten Devotional February 17, 2018**

### **Scripture**

#### **Philippians 4:10-20**

<sup>10</sup>I rejoice in the Lord greatly that now at last you have revived your concern for me; indeed, you were concerned for me, but had no opportunity to show it. <sup>11</sup>Not that I am referring to being in need; for I have learned to be content with whatever I have. <sup>12</sup>I know what it is to have little, and I know what it is to have plenty. In any and all circumstances I have learned the secret of being well-fed and of going hungry, of having plenty and of being in need. <sup>13</sup>I can do all things through him who strengthens me. <sup>14</sup>In any case, it was kind of you to share my distress. <sup>15</sup>You Philippians indeed know that in the early days of the gospel, when I left Macedonia, no church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you alone. <sup>16</sup>For even when I was in Thessalonica, you sent me help for my needs more than once. <sup>17</sup>Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the profit that accumulates to your account. <sup>18</sup>I have been paid in full and have more than enough; I am fully satisfied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent, a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God. <sup>19</sup>And my God will fully satisfy every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus. <sup>20</sup>To our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen.

### **Devotional**

#### **Christin Thorpe, Fellows and Community Engagement Coordinator for the Metro-Urban Institute**

In our reading for today, Paul is writing his thanks to the Philippians for their concern and generosity toward him during his time of distress. Paul explains that although the Philippians' actions benefitted him, more importantly, they were pleasing to God. Because their actions were pleasing to God, they could trust God to provide all their needs. But their needs would not merely be met—they would be met according to God's riches in glory in Christ Jesus. In other words, their needs would be met in a measure far greater than any gift they could ever provide to Paul!

This knowledge of God's ability to meet all our needs may be the reason Paul specifies that although he is grateful for their gifts, he doesn't really need them. He has learned to be content with whatever his condition is, whether he has plenty or little. Maybe this contentment stems from his willingness to do the work God has called him to do freely and generously. As a result of Paul's obedience to God, he can state confidently that God will provide his needs far beyond any human gift ever given.

In this Lenten season of self-examination, we should ask ourselves: How can I live a generous life that is pleasing to God and His people? Have I found contentment in whatever I have by resting on the promise that God will fully satisfy every need according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus?

### **Prayer**

Gracious God, we thank you for your generosity toward us. Remind us that our generous acts could never compare to the generosity you show us when you are well pleased. Help us remain obedient to your work and find contentment in all situations. Restore our faith in our ability to do all things through Christ, who strengthens us.