

Share it!

The Holiday Spirit

Sharing ourselves and our bounty is the ultimate holiday gift.

While toys, games and diamonds are appreciated, they may not reward the giver with as much pleasure as the gift of love.

Love comes in many forms.

It can be in the form of gifts for those less fortunate.

Or it can be sharing the holidays with foreign visitors far away from their home and families.

Visiting shut-ins is another way to share the holiday spirit of giving.

Gifts for those less fortunate can be donations to the hundreds of charities which need your help. One of the oldest forms of holiday giving is the donation dropped into the proverbial Salvation Army red kettle accompanied by the familiar ring of Christmas bells and perhaps a brass band.

You can give a gift to the numerous charities which support their philanthropy through the sales of greeting cards. This is a new giving gimmick which incorporates an old custom.

Gifts needn't be just monetary. Frequently charities have specific needs — furniture to refinish, bedding, clothing and etc. — which would be an appropriate holiday gift.

Baskets of foodstuffs for the needy are traditional, too, and still much appreciated.

These baskets are a nice way to involve youngsters in the giving effort. They could be asked to donate some of their pennies toward the purchase of items for the basket, or they could be asked to wrap items for the basket.

Churches and temples are excellent sources for names and addresses of persons or families who need your help. They need the help all year, probably, but it is especially appreciated during the holidays.

Sharing the holidays with foreign visitors is a very rewarding experience. Often these visitors are students who haven't the means or time to travel to their homes for the holidays.

While these visitors to our country may not celebrate any particular holiday at this time of year, they might appreciate experiencing it with someone who does.

Again, churches, temples and universities are good sources for names of persons who are looking for a place to go during the holidays.

Visiting shut-ins during the holidays can be another meaningful experience to add to your life.

Many church musical groups organize themselves for the holidays to visit hospitals and nursing homes, but these residences and hospitals appreciate visits from anyone who is willing to give of themselves for their patrons.

No one, it seems, is ever too old or too sick to appreciate a visit from a friendly-faced visitor who has a song to sing or a poem to read.

Start a new tradition in your family — even if there's only one of you — give everyone you can afford to give to, a double gift.

An envelope stuck in the Christmas tree could contain a message like this: Happy Holiday. A donation has been given in your name to the name of your favorite charity.

To use a phrase coined long ago — these are the sort of gifts that keep on giving.

Jews, Christians help each other



Robert Rosenbush helping at the hospital last Christmas

Sharing the holiday spirit is something the Temple Beth-El Men's Club really believes in.

Again this year, members of this group will spend Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and the day after Christmas, filling in for the regular Christian volunteers at Providence Hospital so that they may spend Christmastime at home.

The men have worked before in the Emergency Room and have pushed gift carts through the halls to patients' rooms.

The regular American Red Cross volunteers, plus the volunteers from the Our Lady of Providence group, teach the men the tasks they'll perform on their special duty.

Among the members of the Temple Beth-El group who've volunteered are a real estate firm vice-president who has worked in the hospital's gift shop and a contractor who once worked behind the information desk.

All the surrogate volunteers are trained to work in the Emergency Room. They also have been taught about electrocardiograms and blue alerts.

Dorothy Wood, director of Providence Hospital volunteers, considers the Temple Beth-El effort to be an example of the true Christmas spirit.

"It's too much for words," she said.

The men and their teachers go from floor to floor to carry out their training. The men appear intent about learning and the teacher-volunteers said they're very proud of their students.