

"No greater love"

www.graceinaction.org  
February 2008

celebrate  
*February*

# GRACE IN Action



- 2 Presentation of the Lord
- 6 Ash Wednesday
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LIVING CATHOLIC STEWARDSHIP™



James Baca photo

## new parables

### The artistry of life



There was an artist who first took up his paintbrushes as a child. All his life, he had enjoyed art – both the creation of art and the appreciation of art. He studied art throughout his school years, and, all the while, he tried his hand at various media: sculpture and ceramics, pastel and watercolor, oils and acrylics. As he grew, so did his talent. His professors praised his work, and some of his pieces found their way into exhibitions, which gave the young artist a sense of pride. He continued to create, finding both suffering and freedom in his art.

Eventually, the man earned a degree in art, but when he took his talent to the world, he met with much rejection. Eventually, he rejected his own talent. The young artist packed up his art supplies and took a job as a salesman and grew cynical about art and its value in the world. He never painted or sculpted again.

There was another artist who also demonstrated a great artistic talent. This man, too, had enjoyed art his entire life. He, too, had a degree in fine arts. He, too, had been praised by his professors who heralded his work. Like the first man, this young artist met with rejection after rejection in the art world. Yet he continued to draw and to paint and visit art museums and galleries purely out of love without ego or ambition.

He had no expectations of agents, galleries or exhibitions, but he knew his talent cried for outlet, and he knew the ease in his heart when he turned his attention to art. This artist had mastered the art of living.



James Baca photo

## kidscorner

### Heart to heart

Here's a simple craft that will touch the heart of somebody you love.

**YOU WILL NEED:** A flat refrigerator magnet – the kind that often carries advertisements – that you can recycle, scissors, glue, indelible marker, photograph.

**DIRECTIONS:**

- 1) Using the marker, draw a heart shape on the magnet and cut out the heart.
- 2) Lay the magnet over a photograph of yourself.
- 3) Trace around the heart.
- 4) Cut out the photograph.
- 5) Write on the photo, "God loves you.

So do I!"

6) Glue the photo onto the magnet.

7) Mail or hand deliver your magnet in a Valentine.

8) Notice how your heart feels when you do something sweet for somebody else.



"All things are sweet to holy love."  
– St. Bonaventure

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# Chocolatier's sweet heart affects change

"I am a humanitarian first, a chocolatier second," said Lesley Byrne, founder and president of chocolate company Lesley's Life Is Sweet™ Confections for Change. Net proceeds from Lesley's Life Is Sweet profit Cambodian Children's Fund, The Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, Heifer International, Hope Worldwide, Free the Children, Youth Aids, several AIDS/orphans projects in Africa, and various breast cancer research projects. When you buy an artisanal chocolate collection from her website ([www.lesleyslifeissweet.com](http://www.lesleyslifeissweet.com)),

you have the opportunity to choose which charitable organization you want to support. The beautiful, handcrafted chocolates appeal as much to the eye as they do to the palate.

Just back from visiting



Courtesy Photo

Lesley Byrne, pictured with daughter Maya, is a parishioner at St. Francis Xavier Parish in Wilmette, Ill.

children she sponsors in a rural village in northern Cambodia, Byrne wasted no time in setting up another nonprofit organization: Kids Are Sweet International™.

"What drives me is my mission and the children. It's the God force in me," said Byrne. A branch of Byrne's new foundation called One Bike, One Child, One World™ buys used bikes for children.

Reliable transportation from their rural homes to village schools allows the kids to continue from primary to secondary school.

"I wanted these children to know there are people out there in the world who do care about them," Byrne said. "We are all God's children, and I feel it is our responsibility to reach out to those less fortunate than ourselves and help in any way that we can."



Does your chocolate support Africa's civil war? Visit [www.graceinaction.org](http://www.graceinaction.org)

## sowing seeds

*"And then our thoughts are turned to the ultimate sacrifice that Christ made for us. He did so, not because he had to, but because of his great love for us. And to think, all he asks in return is for us to love him and others! But it would mean little to tell someone we love them if we did not try to show that love in a concrete way."*

— Stewardship: A Disciple's Response  
U.S. Catholic bishops' stewardship pastoral



James Baca photo

Catholic stewardship calls us to act not so much out of responsibility or duty but out of love. Love provides the ultimate motivation. And yet love, at times, demands sacrifice on one level or another. As

Dorothy Day, founder of the Catholic Worker movement, liked to say, "Love in action is a harsh and dreadful thing."

Perhaps that's because we humans find ourselves incapable of the perfect,

unconditional love of God. Still, we're called to perfect our love, day by day. We're called to open our hearts again and again, to proclaim our love and also to act upon it.

What sacrifices do you make for love? How do you show your love of God in concrete ways? How do you show your love of others in concrete ways?

## defining moments

### Stewardship alphabet

**M**agnanimity: The virtue enabling one to perform outstanding, morally good actions not for recognition but for love of God and neighbor.

**Meditation:** Prayer that employs reflection, enabling one to grow in sanctity. Meditation connects mind, heart and soul in communicating with God.

**Mercy, Spiritual and Corporal:** Works of charity done out of compassion or concern for those in distress and suffering. The corporal works are feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, clothing the naked, sheltering the homeless, visiting the sick and imprisoned, ransoming the captive, and burying the dead. The spiritual works are instructing the ignorant, correcting the sinners, advising the doubtful, showing patience to sinners and those in error, forgiving others, comforting the afflicted, and praying for the living and dead.

**Mission:** The spreading of the Gospel to all nations. To be a Christian compels one to propagate the Faith.

**Moral Virtues:** The good habits that develop in one who has performed morally good acts. Moral virtues incline one to do good with ease, whereas intellectual virtues empower one to know the truth and supernatural virtues (faith, hope, love). The four fundamental cardinal virtues are prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance.

