

## Is It In You To Give?

From time to time, I get a call from Canadian Blood Services (CBS). They ask me to make a donation. Like countless other Canadians, I respond positively whenever I can. Their advertising acts as a powerful prompt for me. Their tag line, "It's in you to give," goes through my mind. It reminds me that the blood that courses through my body is not only for my benefit. I can safely donate blood that can be used by others. The donated blood is used for the treatment of leukemia, heart surgery and emergency surgeries. It is also used for transfusions. People often suffer from anemia, low red blood cell levels due to internal bleeding. I have seen patients who are suffering from anemia, receive a blood transfusion, and then watch them transform before me. Confusion and weakness are replaced by clear thinking and strength. What a difference that bag of blood can make. The cost to me? A little intentional time set aside for the actual donation. To the person whose life is enriched, bettered and even saved-- "Priceless!"

CBS's tagline reminds me that I also have something else in me that I can donate to help others. It courses around my heart, soul and mind: it is my trust and faith in God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.

Faith in God can be donated in many ways, however, every donor has to be a recipient first. For me, it began with my parents. They were my first faith donors. My parents knew that I was spiritually anemic and that I needed transfusions to bring my spiritual red blood count up to normal levels. So they taught my siblings and me about God the Father who created us; Jesus, God's one and only Son, who saved us; and God the Holy Spirit who builds our faith and leads us through life. They sent us to Sunday School and Confirmation, and they took us to church.

As an adult, I found that the grind of daily life would knock my spiritual red blood count way down and I would become spiritually anemic. When I was spiritually anemic it was easier for me to get confused and to say and do the wrong thing. I would get emotionally weaker and was more likely to give in to temptation. However, I knew where I could get a spiritual transfusion. I got a weekly transfusion at worship on Sunday mornings. The Gospel of Jesus Christ that I heard preached, and the Holy Communion that I received, both transfused and transformed me. Daily Bible readings, devotions and Bible study inspired me and gave me insights for each day. Prayer, both personal and corporate, strengthened me. Transfusions of God's Word, Sacrament and prayer gave me the strength to make it through each day, and even more.

The spiritual strength I received, and continue to receive, from transfusions of Word and Sacrament permit me, from time to time, to recognize those who could use a spiritual transfusion. I meet them all over the place. On buses, airplanes, at restaurants, offices, gas stations, tourist attractions, shopping malls, medical offices, and hospital rooms. They confess that they are spiritually anemic, in need of a transformation. They struggle with their sin, the fear of death and the power of evil in the lives. They are confused, weakened and vulnerable to their lusts and vices. By God's grace, I have been able to administer a dose of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The Good News that Jesus Christ made a donation for them. Jesus suffered and shed his blood on the cross, for them and for their salvation. Jesus paid for their sin and promised that all who believe in Him will have everlasting life. Many change there and then, their strength and lucidity is restored. Some experience a new beginning. For some, this transfusion came very close to the day that they

passed from this world to the next. I now see that every time I believed I was giving a spiritual donation to another, God used this opportunity to give me a spiritual transfusion!

Do you feel like you have lost your way and need help with directions? Are you struggling with life? Do you feel vulnerable and susceptible to stress and pressures? You may be spiritually anemic. You may need a spiritual transfusion. Join us Sundays at Grace Lutheran at 9:00 AM for Contemporary Worship and 10:30 AM for Traditional Worship, and receive a spiritual transfusion through the Gospel of Jesus Christ preached and Holy Communion administered. Come be healed, strengthened and transformed. When you do, your faith will grow, and you will soon find, "It's in you to give."

In Christ

Pastor Ed Skutshek