



| **Wednesday, December 18**

A New Way of Seeing

*Blessed are the pure of heart,
for they shall see God.*

Matthew 5:8

Who doesn't love to people-watch? When Hank and I served at Lake of the Isles Lutheran Church in Minneapolis, we lived in the parsonage right on the lake. What an opportunity for people-watching! The paths around the lake were a popular destination for city folk of all shapes and sizes—walkers, runners, bikers, skaters, strollers. We took most of our meals on the front porch, drinking in a constant and varied view of water and marsh, people and dogs.

We watched lovers argue and embrace, parents scold and laugh, children giggle and pout. We marveled at runners whose lithe bodies moved with grace, and we empathized with those who clearly chafed at the imposition of physical exertion. We wondered about the joy and pain of untold human stories and the ways in which we all look at people without really seeing them. The poet and playwright Oscar Wilde reminds us that, "To look at a thing is very different from seeing a thing. One does not see anything until one sees its beauty."

Who are the people I encounter each day? Do I really know them? Do I try to know them? Who do I see when I look at them, hold them, talk to them? Do I see them and their beauty, or do I see my image of them?

And what of God? How does one begin to see and know God if not in the faces of one another? 1 John offers insight and guidance: "Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love" (1 John 4:7-8).

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St. Paul instructs us that God is alive in us—the indwelling of Christ, the abiding presence of the Spirit. It is this vibrant and vital presence that manifests itself uniquely in each of us, making me me and you you. It is humble to consider that no matter how much I think I know about you or God, I cannot truly or fully know you or God without loving you and loving God. It is indeed a new way of seeing.

O God of Perfect Sight and Love open our eyes to a new way of seeing and being that we may truly know you and more faithfully be your servants of love. Amen.

- Bobbi French