

Wednesday, January 18, 2017 - Day 17 – Genesis 43-45; Psalm 15; Matt 15

I just returned from Chester Eastside Inc. (formally Chester Eastside Ministries) located at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Chester where I am on the board and an officer of Chester Eastside. Chester Eastside is one of the largest food banks in Delaware County and today was one of our twice a week distribution days with close to 100 families coming for their food. Then I came home and read the lessons. Wow, Both the Genesis and the Matthew reading were about food, famine, hunger, and our fellow humans who do not have the where with all to provide this basic human need and they must come to place like ours and be given bags of food and get a hot meal and made to feel wanted. It breaks my heart every time. I think about a single mother with several children and she can't even afford to feed the kids on her own. What must this do to her self-esteem and her worth as a mother and a person. She doesn't even have the dignity to be able to go shopping and select what the children might really like to eat. I've never experienced that, but I see it in their faces. And blessed are the volunteers who also see it and are so empathetic, doing everything to show respect, warmth and love. Some of our volunteers are Chester residents who in times before came to Chester Eastside to get food their family and when their life turned around, they wanted to give back, so they now volunteer on food distribution days which we call our "Hospitality Program". They know more than I will ever know about lack of worth, no self-esteem and poverty.

By The Rev. James Ley