

THE JOY OF WELCOME

by Cathy Meier

...showing hospitality, washing the feet of the Lord's people, helping those in trouble and devoting herself to all kinds of good deeds. (1 Timothy 5:10)

Hospitality refers to the extension of friendship to a stranger or visitor.

I grew up in a family that kept to themselves and were very quiet. I learned about real hospitality when I met Mary Castillo, my future mother-in-law when I was 19. Her Sunday dinners were legendary and compulsory for her 5 children and whomever the kids brought along.

She greeted all with an enormous smile, hug and kiss. The feast started with prayer, then everyone snatched at the bowls. Conversation was lively and usually turned back to “how the Browns would do this week.” Everything was upbeat, Mom would not tolerate arguing. Many times Uncle Jim was shown the door and told to go home!

But we were all connected to each other from the love in her house. We helped each other, and it grew to help neighbors and friends. Little did I know it was all rooted in the teachings of Jesus. Instead of being quiet, and keeping to myself, I learned from that family to extend myself by helping and smiling to all.

When we participate in Loaves and Fishes meals and the Kids Weekend Meals program, we have received so much joy from others that it just fills one's soul with happiness.

BLESS US OH LORD, AND THESE THY GIFTS WHICH WE ARE ABOUT TO RECEIVE, FROM THY BOUNTY. IN CHRIST NAME, AMEN.