

Open-Handed Living

John 6:5–9

Saturday July 17, 2021

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*“There’s a young boy here with five barley loaves and two fish.
But what good is that with this huge crowd?”*
—The Disciple Andrew (John 6:9 NLT)

Andi and Thomas Bonura have three biological children and chose to adopt five more children. While they had hoped for four or five biological kids, issues regarding Andi giving birth altered their plans. After one miscarriage, Andi became pregnant with twins who were born prematurely at 25 weeks. One of the twins, Eli, did not survive. Joey pulled through and was born with cerebral palsy and is visually impaired. Now 11-year-old Joey communicates using sign language. His mother told GMA, “He’s the happiest kid in this house.”

Andi then gave birth to daughters Sadie and Daphne. Due to how complicated and dangerous those pregnancies were, Andi and Thomas decided against having more biological children. In November 2017, Andi and Thomas welcomed newborn baby Bryson into their home as foster parents. After learning that Bryson’s older siblings were also living in the foster care system, the Bonura family welcomed David and Gabrielle into their care, and later, older twin brothers, Thomas and Carter.

Not long after the five siblings were reunited in the Bonura home as foster children, Andi and Thomas seized the opportunity to adopt all five siblings. They received a call that the children’s birth parents had terminated their rights as guardians. Thomas said they asked, “Do you want them?” Andi and Thomas said “yes” without any hesitation.

Andi admitted that the adoption process had been an “emotionally challenging experience.” But Andi and Thomas Bonura kept their hands of generosity open and welcomed the five siblings into their family to give them a safe and loving home in which to grow up.

The Bonura family story encourages and brings hope to all of us as we read it. We are in a season where selfless acts of others-oriented love have an infectious impact. An act of love lifts those who simply view it from afar. At the root of Andi and Thomas’ willingness to foster and adopt the five siblings, there was a spirit of generosity. Being generous does involve our finances (as parents, they will be generous financially too), but it also involves a way of life.

That way of life is living with open hands. Anything in our lives can and will be leveraged to provide hope, love, and help to others.

Not all of us are called to foster or adopt children. But, Christ calls all of His followers to open-handed living. After Jesus had spoken to a crowd of 5,000 men (perhaps as many as 12,000 with women and children), the people were hungry and ready to eat. They looked to the disciples for an answer. The disciples suggested to Jesus that he send the crowd away. Jesus said that He and His disciples would provide for the large group.

Andrew, one of the disciples, brought a boy with a small lunch of five loaves of barley bread and two fish to Jesus. Andrew asked Jesus, “*But what good is that with this huge crowd?*” Jesus blessed the boy’s open-handed generosity and multiplied that little lunch into a meal for thousands. Who knows how God will use us if we live with hands open and ready to give!

Are you generous with your possessions, time, energy, home, finances, and heart? Do you live with your hands open or tightly shut into a fist?

As you pray today, do so with open hands—palm side up. Ask God to show you what He has blessed you with that you can be generous with as you bless someone else. As He shows you how you can be more giving today, celebrate His grace to you!

As God blesses us, we should live with open hands and hearts to be generous in blessing others!

Today’s Prayer

Lord cultivate a generous heart in me. Teaching me to live with open hands. Guide the giving of my time, talents, and treasure toward the people and ministries in whom you want me to invest. Lead me in giving to my local church and other expressions of your Kingdom. —Amen