

Thanks for taking an Episcopal Relief and Development Coupon Book written and produced by the Lake Missoula Clericus, the Episcopal clergy serving the parishes of northwest Montana. Every Monday through Saturday during Lent, count your blessings and share out of that abundance with the poor, victims of natural disasters, and people distressed by war. Your participation will help your ERD respond to global needs.

Ash Wednesday, March 5 You will take nearly 17,280 breaths today. All of them are a gift from God. To help appreciate the gift of just being alive, for every 172.8 breaths, give a penny to the Hope Chest. (All this comes to one dollar.)

Thursday, March 6 In Mexico, the average net adjusted disposable household income is \$12,732 a year. In America the average net adjusted disposable household income is \$38,001. Place in your Hope Chest, a penny per \$1000 household income per year.

Friday, March 7 If you are fortunate enough to have a job, given the fact that at least 6.7% of Americans are looking for work, place in the Hope Chest three pennies for every day of vacation you receive in a year.

Saturday, March 8 Recreating is a fabulous gift from God. Place three pennies in the Hope Chest for every ski, tennis racket, glove and bat, and golf club as well as a dollar for every jet ski, snow mobile or boat that you own.

Monday, March 10 If you plan to vote in the next election, put 25 cents in the Hope Chest in thanksgiving for the blessing of living in a representative democracy. If more than half of the candidates you supported last election for state wide or federal offices won, put 45 cents in the Hope Chest.

Tuesday, March 11 If you had the good fortune to get a flu shot or your children were able to receive inoculations, place 10 cents in the Hope Chest in thanksgiving. If you also got a shingles shot because you had that illness, put another 10 cents in the Hope Chest in thanksgiving for the fact you may never have that pain again.

Wednesday, March 12 In Guatemala, coffee harvesters will earn about \$3.00 a day if they pick a minimum of 100 pounds of coffee. In appreciation for what we have in the morning to get us going, place 5 cents in the Hope Chest for each cup you drink in a day. If you get your cup at a coffee shop, toss in another nickel.

Thursday, March 13 We love our crackers and cookies. For every box or package in the pantry and cupboard, put a dime in the Hope Chest.

Friday, March 14 Some of us remember having a telephone on the wall and a party line. Today, we have cell phones and multiple phones in our home. Thank God you can call and talk to a friend by placing 5 cents in the Hope Chest for each phone in your household, including cell phones.

Saturday, March 15 If you have cable or satellite TV you are very fortunate. Place 2 cents per channel in the Hope Chest. (It will be a better deal if you just put a dollar in the box and not have to count.)

Monday, March 17 Imagine not having clean water to get a drink or brush your teeth. Give thanks for this simple blessing and put in the Hope Chest 10 cents for each sink in your home.

Tuesday, March 18 The NCAA Basketball Tournament starts today. If you have filled out your bracket, put 68 cents in the Hope Chest for the blessing of fun you will have watching the games. If you have no idea what a “bracket” is, count your blessings in that ignorance is bliss and put in a quarter.

Wednesday, March 19 (St. Joseph’s Day) If you look at a satellite image from space, countries such as North Korea are nearly dark at night. We are fortunate to have light whenever we want it. Put a penny in the Hope Chest for every light bulb you have operating in your house. Do count, it will amaze you.

Thursday, March 20 Even on this, the first day of spring, it can be cold outside. Some people are out in the weather taking warmth from subway grates. Place a penny in the Hope Chest for every degree your thermostat is set (right now and not at the night setting.)

Friday, March 21 *Baseball, hotdogs, Chevrolet and Apple Pie!* That is one of the more memorable ad campaigns in the United States. We are fortunate to have transportation when we want it. Place fifty cents in the Hope Chest for each car you have.

Saturday, March 22 The Princeton Review says the University of Iowa is considered the top party school in the country and their spring break ends tomorrow. Put a nickel in the Hope Chest for every refrigerator magnet you have on the door (or sides) of the appliance commemorating a vacation you have had. Double the amount if it has a palm tree in it.

Monday, March 24 Do you ride a bike? Fabulous! Because you are contributing to your health and keeping the environment clean, place a nickel in the Hope Chest thanking God for your good sense.

Tuesday, March 25 (The Annunciation) We take our window on the world, our televisions, for granted. Give the Hope Chest a quarter for each set in your home. If you use your computer for your news, put in the same for every computer, smart phone and iPad type device you use for obtaining news.

Wednesday, March 26 Make a joyful sound unto the Lord! Thank God for the gift of music by placing a dime in the Hope Chest for each musical instrument or sound system, including iPods, of any kind you have in your home.

Thursday, March 27 Imagine not having the ability to purchase food like we do. For every refrigerator and freezer you have in your house, place 50 cents in the Hope Chest.

Friday, March 28 Nell _____, a Peace Corp volunteer in Ghana talks about taking a “bucket bath” instead of a shower. Give 20 cents to the Hope Chest for every shower or tub you have in your home.

Saturday, March 29 You have a hot tub or a pool?!!! How wonderful! Give thanks by putting a dollar in the Hope Chest.

Monday, March 31 In many parts of Africa and Central America, reforestation is a very critical issue. We are fortunate living in a place with such wonderful trees. Put 2 cents in the Hope Chest for each tree in your yard.

Tuesday, April 1 (April Fools Day) If you plan to play a joke on someone today put a dime in the Hope Chest. If you were a victim of a joke, put a quarter in the Hope Chest.

Wednesday, April 2 God made all creatures great and small to complete joy in the world. For every pet you have or have loved, place a dime in the Hope Chest.

Thursday, April 3 Every time you buy a pair of canvas shoes from Tom’s Shoes, they give a pair to someone in the Third World. To date, *Time Magazine* reports that they have given away more than 10,000,000 pairs of shoes. For each pair of shoes or boots you have, place 5 cents in the Hope Chest.

Friday, April 4 If you have a truck and you have it mostly for fun, put a dollar in the Hope Chest. If you take pride in the fact you have a Ford and not a Chevy or a Chevy and not a Ford, put another dime in the Hope Chest. Put two more dimes in it if you have a sticker proclaiming that on your truck.

Saturday, April 5 If you have Medicare or Social Security, thank God. In some places in the world, senior citizens are not so fortunate. Place a quarter in the Hope Chest in appreciation for this security net.

Monday, April 7 Imagine not being able to see a competent physician, dentist, optometrist, physical therapist or the like. If you have enjoyed such health care in the last year, give the Hope Chest fifty cents. And if you live within 50 miles of at least two hospitals, add another 50 cents.

Tuesday, April 8 Imagine having raw sewage running down a trough in the street in front of your home. To give thanks for the sanitation we enjoy, place 15 cents in the Hope Chest for each bathroom in your home.

Wednesday, April 9 At best, families share one room in homeless shelters. Appreciate what you have and place a nickel in your Hope Chest for each room you have in your house or apartment.

Thursday, April 10 From *I Timothy 5: 23*, “No longer drink only water, but use a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent ailments.” Put a dime in the Hope Chest for every bottle of wine and liquor you have. Put a nickel in the Hope Chest for every can or bottle of beer. Put in six cents if it is from a local micro brewery

Friday, April 11 Being alone is one of the most terrifying things one can imagine. Give a nickel to the Hope Chest for each good friend you can name.

Saturday, April 12 World wide, a child dies of starvation every three seconds. The first of the Millennium Development Goals calls for the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger. Help ERD do that by putting a dime in the Hope Chest for each lunch or dinner you had out of the home last week and a penny in it for each can of food in your pantry.

Monday in Holy Week, April 14 One of our greatest liberties we have in America is freedom of the press. Give the Hope Chest 20 cents for each paper or magazine you get at home or subscribe to electronically.

Tuesday in Holy Week, April 15 The International Labour Organization estimates that there are 168 million children working in the world full time with 85 million of those working in hazardous conditions often making products we wear and enjoy every day. ERD will help fight for these kids. Put 20 cents in the Hope Chest for every day off you have a week.

Wednesday in Holy Week, April 16 Imagine being hurt and unable to get help if you really needed it. Give 20 cents to the Hope Chest if you, a family member, or a friend has ever had to use 911.

Maundy Thursday, April 17 Fire fighters and police put their lives at risk rescuing us and protecting our property. Give a dollar in thanksgiving for their service to the Hope Chest.

Good Friday, April 18 The most dangerous job in New York City is that of a sanitation worker. Between being hit by cars and injured by their machinery, those in all our cities and towns do much to make our lives more pleasant. Give a dollar to the Hope Chest in thanksgiving for all our civil servants.

Holy Saturday, April 19 To keep you alive today, your heart will beat around 100,000 times. Thank God for this simple gift by offering just a tiny fraction of a penny for each beat. Put a dollar in the Hope Chest thanking God for the gift of Lent and your having appreciated forty simple blessings.