

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 23

Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth...but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven...For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

— Matthew 6:19-21



Every Lent, my congregation focuses on the Millennium Development Goals. For several years, we have sponsored “MDG Madness.” Twelve dollars buys an entry into an online bracket for the NCAA basketball tournament. The fee goes not to a pool of money for the winner, but to the purchase of another kind of “net”: a mosquito net through Episcopal Relief & Development’s *Nets for Life*® program partnership. The winner receives donated prizes.

We also set a goal each Lent to buy a farm animal for a family through the *Gifts for Life* catalog. One year we bought a cow, another year a flock of chickens. “Hope Chests,” coin boxes provided by Episcopal Relief & Development, are distributed and used to collect change, perhaps the money that would have gone to candy or ice cream or wine or other things “given up” for Lent.

We could just ask people to write a check. But these programs invite us to respond to the needs of those far away in concrete, tangible terms. The \$12.00 we spend to enter an office basketball pool could save a life. The money we spend on treats in a year could buy a cow, providing milk that would feed a family. Jesus said “For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

— Nancy Hopkins-Greene