

This morning we are doing something very special at Open Arms. Marty Moro, one of our members, is being installed as the Executive Director of MOST Ministries. You may have seen the donation box for eyeglasses for MOST's vision teams. Vision teams are just one of the things that MOST does. I'd like to tell you a little bit more about MOST. You can ask Marty or any of the MOST team members here today for more info.

MOST Ministries provides opportunities for people to be strategically and personally involved in mission work through "Goer" and "Sender" activities. A "Goer" is someone who joins a short-term mission team. With Christ as our example, each MOST Ministries team strives to address: the physical and spiritual needs of people. A "Sender" is someone who contributes their time, talent, or treasure to help the mission team members go out to serve. Each year MOST Ministries receives numerous team requests from across the globe. Our teams have served in rural and urban settings and locations on five continents and in 52 countries. Individuals, families, and groups help form the teams. As the MOST website states, ["It is never too late to find a service opportunity that fits you!"](#) MOST gives Christians the opportunity to serve in Jesus' name.

We have all missed investment opportunities during our lifetimes. Maybe you're not concerned about financial investments or do not had the financial resources for investing. Maybe you passed up the opportunity to learn how to do or try something new. We can't learn or try everything. Maybe you missed out on times with family and friends. Those are times that we never get back.

Harry Chapin released the song, "Cats in the Cradle" in the '70's that begins this way, ["My child arrived just the other day. He came to the world in the usual way. But there were planes to catch and there were bills to pay He learned to walk while I was away."](#) The song continues to tell the story about how the dad failed to connect with his son. When the son was grown up, he didn't have time for his dad. It is a song about missed opportunities.

Jesus challenges us to make the most of every opportunity to help and serve others. Jesus said in this parable about the final judgment that people will be divided into two groups, those who follow His example and serve other and those who don't. Jesus said, ["Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the creation of the world. For I was hungry, and you fed me. I was thirsty, and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger, and you invited me into your home. I was naked, and you gave me clothing. I was sick, and you cared for me. I was in prison, and you visited me.'" \(vss. 34-36\)](#)

Christ the King will recognize those who took advantage of the opportunities to serve others. The people in the parable wanted to know when they did these things for Jesus, He answered, ["I tell you the truth, when you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were doing it to me!"](#) (vs. 40) Jesus teaches us to see Him in the hungry, the thirsty, the lonely, the homeless and the sick people we might encounter every day.

What a difference it would make if we would see Jesus in other people. Imagine how differently we would react if we saw Jesus standing behind our annoying boss, or if we saw Jesus standing

with the person who needs some help, or we say Jesus holding the hand of an out of control child. Would we react differently if we saw Jesus in others?

There are times when we might be afraid to reach out to or help another person. It can be risky business. Do you remember the story Jesus told about the man who was traveling between Jerusalem and Jericho. He was robbed, beaten, and left on the side of the road. Two of the religious leaders of Israel passed by and did not help him. They missed their opportunity to help that man. The third man to pass by was a Samaritan. There was a lot of built-up prejudice between the Jews and the Samaritans. It took a Samaritan to help the man in need.

Wayne Gretzky, one the greatest scorers in NHL history said, “You miss 100% of the shots you don’t take.” If you shoot, you might score. If you don’t shoot, you’ll never score. That is not just true in sports, it is also true in life. We all face challenges, fears, and obstacles that can stop us. But failing to help or serve others because of fear is failure itself. We cannot succeed at something we never attempt. Jesus doesn’t want us to fail.

Jesus said, “Let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.” (Matthew 5:16) When we help and serve other people, they can see Jesus through us. Sometimes we think we should convince people to think or believe the way that we do. But that is not necessarily true. Jesus didn’t do that with the people He helped.

There is something I learned a long time ago in ministry. People won’t care how much you know until they know how much you care! Jesus also said, “So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples.” (John 13:34-35) When we love other people in Jesus’ name, we seize the opportunities to help them.

You may have heard the story about a mother who put her son in bed, prayed with him and told him to fall asleep. The boy was afraid of the dark. After Mom left her son’s bedroom, the young boy snuck out and said, “Mommy, I’m afraid.” Mom said, “Don’t worry, son. Jesus is with you.” The little boy answered, “I know He is, Mommy. But right now, I want Jesus with skin on.”

When we see and respond to the opportunities to help, serve, and care for other people, we can be Jesus with skin on for them. With Jesus’ help, we can learn how to make the MOST of the opportunities the Lord gives to us to serve other people whether they are members of our families or our church family, people who live across the street or around the world, people who need a helping hand or a shoulder to cry on. Those opportunities may not last long. But helping and serving others can make a difference for a lifetime.

One of the MOST important things about MOST ministries is that it doesn’t just give people to the opportunity to help someone in another country, it helps the people who go on one of their mission trips to see and make the MOST of the opportunities they have to help and serve people right around them when they get home. A challenge for all of us is to open our eyes to make the MOST of the opportunities God gives us this week to love, serve and care for one another with the prayer that they may see Jesus in us.