

## **Quarters for World Hunger**

**"My 43-year old piggy bank...being filled again!"**

by Bishop Bob Berg from Northwest Network

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It is on the table in our home, and serves as a reminder every time Roxie and I sit down to eat. It carries special meaning for me as it came in the form of a gift with a single quarter in it. Having received it at age ten, I am aware that the glass jar piggy bank, which originally contained maple syrup is at least 43 years old. Clara Hagen was an elderly lady with a homebound son. Often I would be asked to pick up groceries for her at the local store where my father worked. I looked forward to the opportunities as in addition to cookies and milk, Clara would give me a quarter for my time and effort. It wasn't a lot, but yes, a quarter in 1957 could buy a lot more than a quarter today. One day I received my quarter in the empty syrup-jar-bank.

Having sat on a shelf with other things from childhood days, I decided to give the piggy bank a place of prominence in our home. Knowing that again this year our synod assembly would be receiving quarters for world hunger, it seemed a good and right thing to use the bank for quarters through the Lenten season and up to assembly time. In doing so, I now find myself purposely not taking quarters from my pocket when paying for something, but rather looking forward to putting them on a daily basis into the special glass bank.

Many quarters working together is a thought that goes through my mind as I walk by or sit down at the table, although a quarter today is not worth what a quarter was worth in 1957, a number of quarters together do have value and can make a difference. I'm guessing the bank will hold between \$40-50 when full, and if Roxie and I remain intentional about contributing daily, my hope is that we can fill it twice. Many quarters working together has a ring to it, and serves as a

reminder of what happens when many hands, many servants of Christ work together.

And so my mind wanders, and I dream dreams and see visions. What if every voting member to this year's assembly began saving quarters for the World Hunger Assembly Offering? What if every congregation in the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin received quarters for this purpose? What if every Sunday School Class was committed to giving even just one roll of quarters to help the hungry of this world? What if every family in every congregation started saving quarters, and offered those quarters for the sake of the Gospel and the needs of people who have so much less than we have?

Through the regular congregation assembly offering, quilt auction, and collected quarters, the total assembly offering last year for World Hunger projects, in Brazil, Malawi, and other parts of Africa came to \$37,594.07. Of that amount, there was \$11,309.25 in quarters. Think for a moment about the one quarter in that total which shows up as 25 cents. It is a single quarter, just like the one I received from Clara. In today's world, it is pretty insignificant, but along with 45,236 other quarters, that onequarter did make a difference.

Would you join me in my dreaming and visioning? Would you save quarters for this year's assembly offering, and would you encourage others in your congregation to do the same? I can only begin to imagine what the response would be and the extent to which the quarters would impact the lives of others for the sake of the Gospel. Then the righteous will answer him, *"Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink?"...And the King will answer them, "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me."* (Matthew 25)