

December 22nd

Titus 3:4-7

Scharmél Roussel

STOP SHOPPING AND START SHARING

Holiday sales started the 2nd week of October. Retailers wanted to give consumers plenty of time to buy more. The news was full of anxiety over inflation, but I observed no slowdown in frenzied shopping.

Our culture is obsessed with consumerism. As Patricia Tull reminds us in "Inhabiting Eden," between the 1950s and the 1990s, Americans more than doubled the number of cars we owned and used 21 times more plastic. The trend continues.

Jesus owned no home and few possessions. His messages are clear on materialism: a life focused on possessions is a poor life. He walked gently on the earth, offering God's love.

I am committed to offering gifts consistent with my values. One year I gave local organic soap wrapped in paper. I began to explain that I was offering soap without plastic because... but after I got out the words "I am offering soap...", everyone's laughter drowned my words that connect the dots to protecting fragile ecosystems that sustain life. This year I will be more intentional explaining why everyone is getting local honey from bees I have personally met.

As heirs with hope for eternal life (Titus 3:7), let's share gifts that say "I love you as God loved us" and also "the best things in life are not things." Because we all have more than enough, let's open our homes, our hearts, and our tables, ready to accept God's gift of renewal and ready to protect God's creation. Let's stop shopping and start sharing the Good News of God's kindness, love, and mercy (Titus 3:4-5).

Prayer: Creator God, I pray for those whose forests, mountains, beaches and habitats have been destroyed by our material desires. Help me make choices based on creation care values.