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Letters

Intangibles offer much holiday joy

Strangely, perhaps, we celebrate silver hair, deeper wrinkles, aches and new pains with cake, candles, bad singing but with family and friends acknowledging another year.

Typhoons, tornadoes, superstorms, car crashes and daily stories of crime too often derail us from Hanukkah and Christmas, though candles, lights, pastry, trees and family gatherings in fireplace-lit rooms and aroma-filled kitchens are plentiful. Retail screams Black Friday and Cyber Monday, but places of worship might stand aside in silence.

When I have the privilege to address a group, two words I frequently use are "blessed" and "grateful." I give extra time during Christmas to ponder, to see so many past and present faces, often reliving treasured Christmas dinners, snowfalls, extra candy and gift receiving and gift giving, some not wrapped at all.

My sister Cindy was born on Christmas. I am grateful for her and love her so much. Trine University engineering students and their professor, Tom DeAgostino, developed, built and delivered a unique shower this July. I am so grateful, so blessed. This gift has been a life changer for me.

On Facebook, over the phone or at numerous lunches this year, I connected or reconnected with incredible friends and am forever grateful. My life without limbs, an adapted van, Velcro on shoes and shirts and a powered wheelchair does not spell anything other than "can do" and "independence."

Christmas lists of tangibles are everywhere. If Santa or you cannot fulfill every wish, with a hug and a smile remind those presenting the list of the things and people in their lives they already have. My brothers, sisters, nieces, nephews, aunts, uncles and extended members are on my already-have list.

Tragedy, pain, diseases, disabilities, wars and natural disasters tear at our fabric all too often. I hope and pray that Christmas joy finds its place in our hearts, mending torn fabric. Happy Hanukkah and Merry Christmas.

TERRY E. HAFFNER Fort Wayne

Christmas Bureau blessing to families in need

The families and the children of individuals under Allen County Community Corrections supervision have been fortunate enough to receive donations of toys, clothes and a wonderful monetary donation from the Allen County Christmas Bureau. Under the leadership of President Jane Surbeck and her dedicated board members, there has never knowingly been a needy family without some kind of assistance.

Allen County Community Corrections wishes to express its deepest appreciation and acknowledgement to the Christmas Bureau for its continued support of families that may otherwise not receive any assistance for food or toys this year, and continually over the past 22 years.

The abundance of gifts as well as a monetary donation for families to purchase meat and produce for a Christmas dinner was delivered to the Community Corrections Center from the Christmas Bureau. This kindness reaches many people. Case managers who communicate daily with individuals in their care distributed the gifts to families, toys going to families with children.

Truly, the purpose of the Christmas Bureau is to provide to those in greatest need at Christmas time, and this kindness will never be taken for granted either by staff at Allen County Community Corrections nor the families the program serves.

JAVIER ZARAGOZA for Allen County Community Corrections

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