

***By Jan Schultz, The Imperial Republican News Editor***

Much is written this time of year about the Christmas blues.

Often, many of us actually experience sadness or a lack of Christmas spirit, despite all of the decorations, music, holiday activities and parties.

Might that be because we are thinking too much about the “getting” instead of the “giving?”

There are many opportunities right now to get out of the “blues” if that’s what you are experiencing.

What a great idea “The Gift” program is that our community has fully supported this season. Many of us probably have been involved in something similar in the past, whether through the Angel Tree program or anonymously through the social services offices.

Sixty-eight local families will have a brighter Christmas thanks to this year’s program.

Another effort you can be involved in is the Dec. 25 Christmas Day Dinner provided by the Ministerial Association for anyone who will be home alone or looking for a place to share a holiday meal. You can volunteer time at the dinner or contribute some of the food. See the ad about it in this week’s issue or watch for announcements in your church.

The gift of time, something we all value, is precious this time of year.

Yet, providing that time through volunteer work at your church or other service-minded groups, visiting someone who is alone or stopping at the Imperial Manor to visit our seniors may help you experience the joy this season represents for us all year long.

But, don’t limit your giving to just the Christmas season.

One of my favorite prayers is the Prayer of St. Francis, which reinforces that we should concentrate on “giving” rather than “receiving.”

Here is part of that meaningful prayer:

“O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek

To be consoled as to console;

To be understood as to understand;

To be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive;

It is in pardoning that we are pardoned;

And it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.”

Carry the message in that prayer throughout the season and all year long.