

**Touchstones Faith in Action**

**In-Reach / Out-Reach / Justice-Making**

**Generosity**

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**1.0: Introduction**

Gary Chapman suggests that, “generosity is one of the seven characteristics of love. The others are: kindness, patience, courtesy, forgiveness, honesty, and humility.” Based on this, the theme of generosity is well-suited to February’s 29 days in this leap year. Imagine, the gift of an extra day.

Generosity is more than a theme; it is a virtue. One way to observe this is through a Journey of Generosity. That journey could be limited to one day: Valentine’s Day or extend for all of February.

While others may have done this earlier, Sasha Dichter began rebranding Valentine’s Day as Generosity Day in 2011. This followed his Generosity Experiment that he first conceived on December 9, 2009. See his blog entry on that day at <https://sashadichter.com/2009/12/09/generosity-experiment/> He offers a thoughtful 2013 Q&A about the day at <https://sashadichter.com/2013/02/12/generosity-q-anda/>

Sasha Dichter was director of business development at the Acumen Fund, a nonprofit Venture Capital Fund for enterprises serving the poor, before launching his own company. He wrote the “Manifesto for Nonprofit CEOs” and blogs on philanthropy and social change.

He has spoken about the Generosity Experiment several times. See *The Generosity Experiment* by Sasha Dichter (19:37) at <https://www.ted.com/talks/sasha_dichter>

**2.1: Observances**

**2.1.1:** *Valentine’s Day*—February 14, 2020 observed as *Generosity Day*

Consider rebranding and observing Valentine’s Day as Generosity Day, as a way of broadening love beyond an intimate relationship.

**2.1.2:** *Random Acts of Kindness (RAK) Day and Week*

Random Acts of Kindness Week, also known as RAK Week, is observed next beginning on Tuesday, February 11, 2020. It has been observed annually for 7 days starting on February 11th since 1995.

Website: <https://www.randomactsofkindness.org/>

**2.2: Activities & Resources**

**2.2.1:** *Thirty Days of Generosity* by Shari’s Berries lists specific acts of generosity to consider. See <https://www.berries.com/blog/30-day-generosity-challenge>

**2.2.2:** *30 Days of Generosity* is a thoughtful diary of how one person undertook this challenge. See <https://generosity30.wordpress.com/>.

**2.2.3:** *Pay It Forward*

**The Pay It Forward Foundation was** established in September of 2000, by Catherine Ryan Hyde, author of the 1999 novel, ***Pay It Forward.*** The next year brought the success of the movie, *Pay it Forward*, starring Helen Hunt and Haley Joel Osment. The philosophy of Pay It Forward is that through acts of kindness among strangers, we all foster a more caring society. Pay It Forward seeks to perform and support acts of kindness to people, to animal welfare and to the environment and foster compassion to all who share the planet.

Since early 2015 the foundation has provided thousands of copies of the Pay It Forward Young Readers Edition to schools and communities across the United States.

Website: <https://www.payitforwardfoundation.org/>

**2.2.4:** Living with Character: Generosity

This 8-page document includes a Generosity Assessment and suggested generosity goals. See <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/598b19f9e58c6247208d1357/t/5a68f37fe4966b342c29fc5b/1516827519724/Generosity.pdf>

See video at <https://www.familiesofcharacter.com/generosity> (4:44)

**2.2.5:** *Random Acts of Kindness*

RAK offers Kindness lesson plans for K-5 & 6-8. These focus on their six core components of kindness: respect, caring, inclusiveness, integrity, responsibility, and courage. See <https://www.randomactsofkindness.org/for-educators>

# 2.2.6: See *How 30 Days of Kindness Made Me a Better Person* by Cecilia Meis at <https://www.success.com/how-30-days-of-kindness-made-me-a-better-person/>