A Cartwheel for 1,000 Meals

Posted At : August 30, 2013 11:10 AM | Posted By : Food Bank Staff
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by Angela Khabeb

I am the pastor of a rural congregation in Delphos, Ohio, and this summer our VBS (Vacation Bible School) theme was "Big Apple Adventure." We invited the children to bring an offering each day during our four-day program. This year, in keeping with our New York City theme, we designated our offering to Food Bank For New York City. I have the children the goal of $100 in four days. After I extended the challenge, a little girl raised her hand enthusiastically and asked, "Pastor Angela, what if we raise more than $100?"

Now, I don't know how it happened, but all of a sudden I heard my own voice blurt out, "If you raise more than $100, I'll do a cartwheel right down the center aisle of the church!" Whoa, famous last words, right? Well, the children raised more than double that amount! And, yes, on the last day of our VBS Big Apple Adventure I did do a cartwheel. And believe me, what my gymnastic maneuver lacked in grace and ability, I clearly made up for in effort.

Wouldn't you know it? Some kids shouted out, "Two cartwheels for $200!" I sure wanted to do a second cartwheel, but my body disagreed. It was just like Jesus said, "The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak." The next day, a parishioner asked me about the cartwheel rumor. I told him, "It was no rumor. In fact, I think I pulled something." He quipped, "Yeah, it's called your stupidity bone." He may have been on to something. Nevertheless, after a hot bath and a couple of pain pills I was good as new. After all, it was for a great cause. Thank you Food Bank For New York City for the awesome work that you do. Many blessings to you and your mission to God's people.

Reverend Angela Khabeb is the pastor of St. Peter Lutheran Church in Delphos, Ohio.