

In the movie Forrest Gump, he is called stupid in a couple of scenes. His response was to say, "Stupid is, as stupid does." That expression is a variant of "handsome is as handsome does" which appears in The Lord of The Rings and Herman Melville's Billy Budd, and variants of this go back to Chaucer in 'The Wife of Bath's Tale' written around 1387.

On Friday, 9 October, I had occasion to go to East Bentleigh in Melbourne, and I took the opportunity to visit a lady with whom I had been corresponding. After this meeting I came up with another variant of that saying: "Grace is as Grace does".

Some time ago, we received a parcel of donated clothes from someone called Grace Gorman. Packed with the clothes was a note explaining that the clothes had been washed, mended, carefully inspected and donated only when they passed her stringent quality control checks. The note also expressed her good wishes to anyone who found these clothes of use. There was a telephone number and a website address where other stuff could be obtained, such as furniture and even a rotary clothes hoist. In case someone could make use of her other donated items I pinned that note on the notice board at the Recovery Centre.

Subsequently a hand-knitted woollen jumper was just the right fit for one of our longterm volunteer fencers (Jenny Oliver, the Bush Poet). I took a photo of Jenny wearing that jumper at a Friday night dinner, and sent Grace a copy.

Grace is not a millionaire. In fact her circumstances could be described as having limited resources, yet she finds it in her heart to try to help others who are less fortunate than herself. Grace is a committed Socialist and believes all human beings have a right to a life of dignity. At the best of times, Grace has no patience for unwieldy bureaucracies nor their creators, governments of all political hues. Particularly at times of serious crisis such as Black Saturday Grace has no faith that bureaucracies will respond appropriately or in time. Grace believes it is her obligation and privilege to help others who are less fortunate than herself, and she does this by sharing her meagre resources.

OK. Now why the quotation? Webster's Dictionary defines grace as "A sense of propriety and consideration for others." Other definitions include

A pleasing or attractive quality or endowment.

Elegance or beauty of form, manner, motion, or action.

The freely given, unmerited favour and love.

And expressions like, With good grace, willingly; ungrudgingly: as in "She took on the extra work with good grace".

On behalf of all the recipients who have benefitted from your generous donations, and from others like me whose lives have been enriched by associating with you: thank you, Grace.

Grace Gorman truly deserves to be included in the ranks of Our Helpers.