

Questions for Reflection

1. Name the top five things you are most grateful for that you might easily take for granted.
2. In your experience, does the practice of thanking God for specific gifts lead you to a greater sense of God's love and presence in your life? Does it help you become a happier person?
3. Do you ever sing your prayers to God? If this is hard, why is that?

Exercise 1: Use the five decades of the Rosary to give thanks to God for five specific blessings in your life

- Be *concrete* naming five blessings in your life, especially things you may be inclined to take for granted
- Pray each of the five decades of the Rosary as an offering of thanksgiving for these blessings

Exercise 2: Consciously offer thanks at Mass

- The word 'Eucharist' means 'thanksgiving.'
- Consider what gifts of nature and of human creativity and labor (your own or others') you want to offer thanks for. Join these with the offering of bread and wine at Mass.

Exercise 3: Sing prayers of praise and thanksgiving to God

- Singing can help us enter into deeper times of praise and thanksgiving
- Make a playlist:
 - Matt Maher, Brother Isaiah, Audrey Assad, Hillsong, Matthew Zigenis, the Virgil Project, etc.

Exercise 4: Share your blessings with others

- Call to mind your blessings, and consider how you can share them with others
 - Health – become a blood donor or visit people who are homebound or in a nursing home
 - Education – serve one hour a week in our after-school homework help day
 - Material blessings – share with the poor
 - Life – serve as a mentor at our Care Clinic center



Week Six: Prayer of Thanksgiving

1. From last week's message, one thing that can help us deal with tough and uncomfortable feelings is a spiritual journal

a) Name the feeling in us; b) Express the feeling; c) Own the feeling and dialogue with it; d) Talk with Jesus about the feeling

2. This week's readings are examples of prayers of thanksgiving

Sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done wondrous deeds! Psalm 98
One of them, realizing he had been healed, returned, glorifying God in a loud voice; and he fell at the feet of Jesus and thanked him. Luke 17

3. Prayers of thanksgiving take time to stop and acknowledge God as the Source of all good things

Now I know that there is no God in all the earth, except in Israel. Please accept a gift from your servant. 2 Kings 5

4. Gratitude brings us into relationship with God and is an expression of faith that saves us

Jesus said, "Ten were cleansed, were they not? Where are the other nine? Has none but this foreigner returned to give thanks to God?" Then he said to him, "Stand up and go; your faith has saved you." Luke 17

5. Moses warns us not to take our blessings for granted

Take care lest your heart become proud and you forget the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, who led you through the terrible wilderness, who brought you water from the rock, who fed you in the wilderness with manna. Beware lest you say in your heart, 'My power and the strength of my own hands have obtained for me this wealth.' Remember, it is the Lord your God who gives you power to get wealth. Deuteronomy 8

6. Gratitude keeps us conscious that God is always present and active

Sing joyfully to the LORD, all you lands: break into song; sing praise! Ps. 95