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OUR PIUS UPDATE  
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Give thanks to the Lord,  
for He is good; His love endures forever.  
- Psalm 118:1



## BREAD AND THANKSGIVING



*"Would you like any bread, sir?"* I asked each person who passed through the line. *"Yes, God bless you and thank you for being here."* One man said to me. Some walked through with their little children, others with an obvious glaze about their vision, many missing teeth, the minority in torn old clothes; they were white, black, Hispanic and from other countries. They were moms, dads, grandpas, a few teenagers and many men that looked worn down from life.

A bell would ring every 30 minutes and the Monk in charge would say *"Everybody stop whatever you are doing right now. Let's say a prayer in thanksgiving for your life and all that God has blessed you with. Our Father...."* I thought to myself are you kidding me. You are asking these people to pray in thanksgiving and they are in a soup kitchen. What will they give thanks for in this moment. Then I looked at them sitting at those tables and I watched as they nodded in agreement with the monk. They were appreciative to God for their life and their meal at that moment. We all prayed together the Our Father; some with mumbled words others as clear and loud as if they were in a church. We prayed together, we exchanged smiles and pleasantries. They ate their fill and some came back through the line up to 3 more times. They were hungry, tired, distraught and weathered. But they were kind and had dignity.

Many of us are just a few paychecks away from being in that same line. They are no different really. They are people just like we are who have for various reasons found themselves in true *"need"*. Well, who among us isn't in some type of need in this life? It was humbling to stand there and give food to the hungry. It made us all appreciate the blessings in our lives and realize we truly are brothers and sisters in this world. I gave a slice of bread away but they gave me so much more.

**SOURCE:** Copyright 2012 Lori Hadorn-Disselkamp, [www.catholicmom.com](http://www.catholicmom.com)





Next weekend we will be celebrating **Thanksgiving**. But recent events and dealing with COVID for such a long time may have left us feeling discouraged and not feeling very thankful. The apostle Paul encouraged thankfulness in all circumstances, not just in certain seasons, as a way of orienting our lives and thinking around God's perspective.

Why not take some time over the next few days to focus on God and God's great love for us so that we can be thankful in all times and circumstances.

**GOD THE FATHER:** See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! (*1 John 3:1*)

Read **Psalm 103** slowly, turning each verse into praise for your Father. Re-read it throughout the week to remind you of the Father's compassion on you, His child (*verse 13*).

**GOD THE SON:** God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. (*Romans 5:8*)

Read **Colossians 1:15-23**. Consider all the qualities of Jesus as the Son of God. Praise Him for each aspect of His nature, and for the hope He provides through our reconciliation.

**GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT:** The Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. (*John 14:26, 27*)

Read **John 14:15-31**. Reflect on the promises that Jesus made to His followers. Praise God for His provision of the Holy Spirit. What truth do you need the Holy Spirit to remind you of this week?

**OUR LIFE IN GOD:** Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! (*2 Corinthians 5:17*)

Read **Psalm 143**. Make this psalm a prayer to God. Verse 8 says, "Let the morning bring me word of your unfailing love, for I have put my trust in you." What evidence do you see of God's unfailing love for you each and every day?

**SOURCE:** Adapted from **Approaching Thanksgiving: Four Weeks of Thankfulness**  
By Carla Foote for **The Navigators**

## A LITANY OF THANKSGIVING



*Let us give thanks to God our Father for all his gifts so freely bestowed upon us.*

*For the beauty and wonder of your creation,  
in earth and sky and sea  
We thank you, Lord.*

*For all that is gracious in the lives of men and women,  
revealing the image of Christ  
We thank you, Lord.*

*For our daily food and drink,  
our homes and families,  
and our friends  
We thank you, Lord.*

*For minds to think,  
and hearts to love,  
and hands to serve  
We thank you Lord.*

*For health and strength to work  
and leisure to rest and play  
We thank you, Lord.*

*For the brave and courageous,  
who are patient in suffering  
and faithful in adversity  
We thank you, Lord.*

*For all valiant seekers after truth, liberty, and justice  
We thank you, Lord.*

*For the communion of saints,  
in all times and places  
We thank you, Lord.*

*Above all,  
we give you thanks for the great mercies and promises given to us in Christ Jesus our Lord  
To him be praise and glory, with you,  
O Father, and the Holy Spirit, now and for ever. **Amen.***

**(SOURCE: Book of Common Prayer, pages 836-837)**

## DON'T BREAK MY BANANA



Do you know what will make my two-year-old completely lose her mind? Breaking her banana while peeling it! Mary is a child who likes routine, and part of her morning ritual is snuggling with me while I sip coffee, and she eats a banana. Most mornings, the banana peels easily, but occasionally in the peeling process, it breaks as I open it. My heart sinks as I think, *“Oh, no! I did not have enough coffee to handle a meltdown.”*

Oh, boy can a broken banana set her off! As she’s our third child, I know that this is a rite of passage in the world of toddlerhood, making a stance for how she wants things to go. And let’s be honest, we adults are notorious for throwing our own little temper tantrums when things don’t go the way we want them to go. ***How many times did God hear my own tantrums over things as simple as a broken banana?*** I honestly don’t want to know the number!

Whether life hands us something small or large that messes with our plans, we have a simple choice. It is the choice that Mary makes every time her banana breaks: to calm down and work with what’s before her or continue her meltdown because things didn’t go as she planned. And while her meltdown may go for a bit some mornings, I never once saw her refuse to eat the *banana*. ***At some point she calms down and accepts the reality before her and decides to work with what she’s got.*** We have the same choice that Mary does. The difference comes in who we know is walking with us through the situation. Mary can only grasp that my husband or I am with her. You and I, though, have the intelligence and the understanding to know that God is not only sitting with us in whatever we are facing, but ***that God will also guide us to know how to work with what we’ve got.***

So, while I am notorious for telling God, *“Don’t you dare break my banana”*, I also know that even if my banana breaks, God’s going to get me through it!

**SOURCE:** Becky Eldredge, [www.ignatianspirituality.com](http://www.ignatianspirituality.com)