

May 2, 2025

Daily Reflections

Journeying through Easter



Center for Spiritual Development

AN ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE

By Julie Mussché

A Quote

"Praise God. It puts everything into its proper place and perspective."

RABBI NACHMAN OF BRESLOV

Reflection

Recently, I underwent shoulder surgery -- this has raised all sorts of spiritual adventures.

Right-handed, right shoulder, an interesting conundrum. Prior to the medical procedure, I had practiced many life functions left-handed. Things generally went well until I tried writing. What appeared on the page took me back to kindergarten and a memory of a Mother's Day card written in crayon. Now, for someone who writes as a part of their ministry, this was a bit disconcerting.

For the monthly reflections, I first write everything longhand. There is something particular about pen on paper. There are, fortunately, options like using a keyboard or transcription, and it is interesting typing left-handed. All in all, there are workarounds which do require patience and creativity.

At first, eating left-handed was precarious and required clothing protection as food freely flew. My technique improved over time and things became less messy. Going out to eat several times, it was good to know that the kitchen folks will cut your food in advance of serving. This is a very cool thing.

One morning, when I could finally figure out how to cut an apple left-handed, the moment of simply being able to prepare something to eat was gratifying. A tedious endeavor, impatiently I grabbed a chunk of the fruit before mixing in with yogurt and popped it into my mouth with gusto. How sweet it was! It seemed like some sort of exotic delicacy.

The first several days following surgery, life was rather primitive. A sling does not allow much variety in wardrobe. But on day three, my neighbor, a retired post-op nurse, helped me bathe and dress. Wow, it was spectacular. It reminded me a bit of hygiene care when crossing the Sahara. And just as comparable, the first shower following the journey was heavenly.

Let this introduce the spiritual adventures related to being grateful. So many acts of kindness, from shopping, to car care, to making meals, to baths, to laundry, to Easter Vigil celebration, to Easter supper, to a Passover Seder meal ... how can one say thank you enough? Then, there are the gifts of limitations, to be aware of the physical and geographic challenges of mobility, the curbs to perform life functions and to participate socially.

“Gratitude is the awareness that life in all its manifestations is a gift for which we want to give thanks. The closer we come to God in prayer, the more we become aware of the abundance of God’s gifts to us. We may even discover the presence of these gifts in the midst of our pains and sorrows.... Thus gratitude becomes a quality of our hearts that allows us to live joyfully and peacefully even though our struggles continue.” *Henri Nouwen*



For Pondering

Consider a time in your life where you needed to rely on the kindness of others.

- What were the spiritual fruits of that season?
- If you have time, draft a gratitude list to capture all the things you are grateful for.

For Prayer

*Extravagant One,
you are endlessly creative in the gifts you bestow on me.
Thank you.
Amen.*

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