

November 19, 2024

Daily Reflections



Center for Spiritual Development

SEASON OF GRATITUDE

By Sister Katherine “Kit” Gray, CSJ

QUOTES OF THANKSGIVING

I give thanks to you, O Lord my God, with my whole heart, and I will glorify your name forever.

PSALM 86:12

*It is good to give thanks to the LORD,
to sing praises to your name, O Most High;
to declare your steadfast love in the morning,
and your faithfulness by night.*

PSALM 92:1-2

Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

1 THESSALONIANS 5:18

And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

COLOSSIANS 3:17

Reflection

We are about a week away from the United States' celebration of Thanksgiving Day. This holiday began with an act of Congress in 1782 that proclaimed November 28 of that year a national day of "solemn thanksgiving to God for all his mercies." After that, various presidents set different dates for a National Day of Gratitude. In 1863 Abraham Lincoln directed that Thanksgiving be observed on the final Thursday of November, and it has been celebrated annually on that "formula" since then. In 1941, Thanksgiving became a federal holiday.

The idea of celebrating Thanksgiving and expressing gratitude has made the entire month of November a "season of gratitude" for me.

The word gratitude is derived from a Latin word meaning grace, graciousness. Grace means a "free gift" and gratitude has come to mean "thankful appreciation for what we receive." With gratitude, people acknowledge the goodness in their lives and usually recognize that the source of that goodness lies at least partially outside themselves. Gratitude helps people to connect to something bigger, greater than themselves.

Giving and receiving gratitude has many positive effects: it is good for a person's well-being; can lower blood pressure; increase empathy; lessen envy and jealousy; help people relish good experiences and deal with adversity.

Gratitude, though, is a spiritual discipline: it takes intentionality to recognize a gift, a kindness; to "count one's blessings"; and to say "thank you."

Pope Francis says, "If we can realize that everything is God's gift, how happy will our hearts be! Everything is his gift! He is our strength! Saying 'thank you' is such an easy thing and yet so hard to do." (October 13, 2014)

Thankful Grateful Blessed

For Pondering

- What are you most grateful for today?
 - Write down five things for which you are grateful.
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For Prayer

*O Divine Gift-giver,
I stand beneath the endless waterfall
of your abundant gifts to me.*

*I thank you especially for the blessings of life,
the most precious of all your gifts to me.*

*I thank you, Ever-generous One,
for clothing to wear,
for food and drink to nourish my body,
for all the talents and skills
that you have bestowed upon me.*

*I thank you for the many gifts of my life,
for family and friends and community,
for faith that gives me a sense of purpose.*

*I thank you as well
for the sufferings and trials of my life,
which, together with my mistakes,
are among my most important teachers.*

*Grant that I may never greet a new day without the awareness of some gift
for which to give you thanks.*

*And may constant thanksgiving
be my song of perpetual praise to you.*

SIOUX INDIAN PRAYER

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