

October 12, 2025



THE RETURNING GRATEFUL LEPER

By Sister Bernie Inocencio, CSJ

As you begin this reflection, I invite you to center yourself with the song Taize - In the Lord I'll be Ever Thankful.

***"In the Lord, I'll be ever thankful.
In the Lord, I will rejoice.
Look to God, do not be afraid!
Lift up your voices, the Lord is near.
Lift up your voices, the Lord is near."***

Today's Gospel Acclamation and an Excerpt from the Gospel

"In all circumstances, give thanks, for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus."

1 THESSALONIANS 5:18

Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God

with a loud voice. He prostrated himself at Jesus's feet and thanked him. And he was a Samaritan. Then Jesus asked, "Were not ten made clean? So where are the other nine? Did none of them return to give glory to God except this foreigner?" Then he said to him, **"Get up and go on your way; your faith has made you well."**

LUKE 17:15-19

Reflection

In all circumstances in your life, how have you given thanks to God?

The gospel today emphasizes God's innate loving-kindness that extends beyond nationalities, origins, or past actions. Jesus demonstrated to the ten lepers the same loving generosity without distinction.

While all the lepers rejoiced upon being healed, only one of the lepers returned and expressed gratitude to Jesus. Jesus looked for the other nine who went on their merry way, excited to go back to family and to society. The nine did not return to give thanks to Jesus.

What could Jesus have meant when he said, 'Go on your way; your faith has made you well'? Was Jesus only referring to the physical healing of the person?

I experienced some health challenges recently which resulted in a surgery scheduled for early next month. A sense of fear came over me as I went through my pre-op tests. I was afraid of what is to come. Last Wednesday, I was in a group spiritual direction. The Scripture was from Psalm 103: 1-5. It provided me comfort and assurance of healing and renewal (youth renewed like the eagles, the line said). As we were silent, "Be still and know that I am God, keep trusting," came to me. I hold on to that truth. I am grateful that God sent me those comforting words.

Does God need our gratitude? How does our gratitude add to God's immutable and perfect greatness? Why do we have to be grateful?

Giving thanks to God is not an act of appeasement or a way to "give" something to an incomplete God; rather, it is something we, the recipients of God's grace, benefit from.

God wills us to be grateful because it is beneficial for us (1 Thessalonians 5:18). ***It is an uplifting attitude that buoys our soul, cultivates character,***

keeps bitterness at bay, and realigns our focus from ourselves to God's abiding presence and providence.

Thanksgiving is a grace that humbles us because it helps us recognize the One Source of Everything that Is. Gratitude becomes our gateway to praise, honor, and worship God's providence, goodness, love, and care for creation. It is a powerful spiritual discipline that brings peace and joy and pushes us away from self-entitlement or self-absorption and into a more outward-focused relationship with God and others.

I quote Brother David Steindl-Rast, an Austrian-American Benedictine monk, author, scholar, and proponent of grateful living: "The greatest gift one can give is thanksgiving. In giving gifts, we give what we can spare, but in giving thanks we give ourselves."



Image created by Sister Bernie Inocencio, CSJ

For Pondering

- Consider instances in your life when you received God's provision or divine intervention, such as a healing, a solution, or a blessing, which

went unnoticed or was received without thanksgiving.

- What are the circumstances surrounding this “ingratitude?”
 - What was going on in your mind and heart that you were unable to take notice or give thanks for God’s provision or blessing? I suggest you write your answers down.
 - How will you resolve and make up for this unthankfulness?
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- How does “giving thanks” influence your perspective and actions in the face of challenges?
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For Prayer

Today, I invite you to repeat Taize’s lyrics earlier like a mantra:

In the Lord, I'll be ever thankful.

In the Lord, I will rejoice.

Look to God, do not be afraid!

Lift up your voices, the Lord is near.

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