



**JUST A GUY IN THE PEW**  
**THE NARROW ROAD.**

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MAY 2021 | GRATITUDE



*In loving memory of Bill Platten.  
A leader, a mentor, a friend.*



# **THE NARROW ROAD**

THE EVERYDAY GUIDE FOR THE EVERYDAY GUY



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# OPPORTUNITIES FOR GRACE

DAY	MORNING PRAYER	THE NARROW ROAD	DAILY MASS	CONFESSION	ADORATION	TIME WITH WIFE	TIME WITH KIDS	NIGHT PRAYER/ EXAMEN	SUNDAY MASS
1									
2									
3									
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15									



DAY	MORNING PRAYER	THE NARROW ROAD	DAILY MASS	CONFESSION	ADORATION	TIME WITH WIFE	TIME WITH KIDS	NIGHT PRAYER/ EXAMEN	SUNDAY MASS
16									
17									
18									
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31									




# THE VIRTUE OF GRATITUDE

Alright guys, this month we are setting our sights on practicing and living out the virtue of gratitude. That's right, we are going to concentrate on being thankful for everything in our lives. Why is that so important on this journey towards holiness? A virtuous man is a grateful man, that's why. How can he not be? Think about that. In fact, one sure sign that we are becoming virtuous is that we are humble enough to be grateful. A man full of vice and pride would never be grateful for anything because deep down he would believe the graces received either came from his own doing or he wasn't in need of them in the first place. Therefore, he is ungrateful and lacking in virtue. Venerable Fulton Sheen told us just that. He said, "Gratitude is characteristic only of the humble. The egotistical are so impressed by their own importance that they take everything given them as if it were their own due. They have no room in their hearts for recollection of the undeserved favors they received." Is this the way you have been living your life thus far? I know at one time I did, and I can tell you I was never happy.

So many of us spend our time looking at the things we have missed out on or the things we haven't gotten in life that we forget to be grateful for all the gifts we have been given. When we spend our lives this way, we fall prey to the sins of comparison and envy. We are never satisfied with what we have because we are too busy being jealous over what somebody else received. Envy and greed steal our gratitude and joy. Each of us can probably remember getting a gift as a kid only to see that someone else in the room got something better. We may have gotten the exact thing that we wished for, but in the moment we saw that someone else got something different and we quickly became ungrateful for the very thing we had asked for. How many of us with good jobs, nice houses, and beautiful families have caught ourselves pining after the life and gifts of another man? How many of us have found ourselves griping over leftovers when there are so many people going without food for weeks on end. Brothers, we will never be the joyful, virtuous men we are trying to be if this is the way we go about life. This is the Devil's hope for you. That you spend your entire life depressed and angry because you think you have been dealt a lesser hand than other people.

My brothers, in order to be joyful, holy disciples, we have to be determined to be grateful men. We have to be purposeful each and every day at looking at everything as a gift—even the bad things that happen. Why? Because suffering allows you to partake in the suffering of Christ, which is itself a gift. The fact that you wake up breathing every morning is a gift. The fact that you get to spend another day (whether sunny, rainy, or freezing) with your family is gift. Every morsel of food that the Lord provides for you is a gift. The fact that you can walk, stand, see, hear, and speak freely is a gift. Men, let's quit looking at all the things in life that we didn't get or missed out on. Let's turn our attention towards thanking God, our wives, our children, and



our neighbors for the very gifts that they are in our lives. Let us spend our time not as wanting disciples but as grateful ones. In the words of St. Ambrose, “No duty is more urgent than returning thanks.” This month, I look forward to becoming a more grateful man with you on this narrow road.

**In Christ,  
John**





# VIRTUE PLAN FOR THE MONTH

## VIRTUE: GRATITUDE

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### MOTTO:

"Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing. In all circumstances give thanks, for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus" **(1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)**

### ROOT SIN:

Ingratitude/Envy/Greed

### WHERE DO I SEE THIS SIN IN MY LIFE?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

### PLAN TO FORM GRATITUDE

**WEEK 1:** Gratitude and God

**WEEK 2:** Gratitude and My Wife

**WEEK 3:** Gratitude and My Children

**WEEK 4:** Gratitude and My Neighbor

### PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

**ST. RICHARD OF CHICHESTER**

Thanks be to Thee, my Lord Jesus Christ,  
for all the benefits which Thou hast given me, for me,  
O most merciful friend, redeemer and brother.  
May I see Thee more clearly,  
love Thee more dearly  
and follow Thee more nearly.

**WEEK 1 REFLECTION:**

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# **GRATITUDE AND GOD**

You were going to hell—make no mistake about it. Due to Adam and Eve's choice in the garden and the repercussions it triggered, we were all facing eternal separation from God. At least that was the road we were headed down until God decided to give up the one thing He loved most in order to save us.

That one thing was Jesus.

He did it for you and He did it for me. I think a lot of times we forget the gravity of that decision. It's easy in the hustle and bustle of our everyday life to allow that fact to lose its meaning. John 3:16 can quickly become just another sign in the crowd at a sporting event or a group of words and numbers on the eye black of an athlete. Have we allowed this to happen in our lives? Is Holy Week—that special time when the stark reality of what Jesus went through is depicted right in front of us—the only time we find ourselves being grateful to God? My brothers, it used to be that way for me. But that was before I began to understand the virtue of gratitude and the importance it should have in my life.

St. Paul writes to the Thessalonians, "Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you" (1 Thes 5:18). Brothers, we are to give thanks to God for everything in our lives. Everything that you are and everything that you have is a gift from God. Your family, your job, the things you are good at, your health, your ability to breathe, and everything in between is a gift from God. So many before us knew that. Look at St. Mary Magdalene as she washed the feet of Jesus with tears of gratitude for what He had done in her life. Look at the one leper out of 10 who returned to thank Jesus for healing him. Are we living a life in constant gratitude or are we walking away ungrateful as the other nine lepers did? That's the question we need to be asking ourselves this month. If we do not learn to be grateful for what God has done for us then we will never be joyful. We will forever be looking to fleeting things of the world for momentary brushes with happiness. If we are not joyful for the daily blessing God pours out upon us, then we will never be able to allow those blessings to overflow onto others. That's the thing: if we lack gratitude for the gifts we have been given, then we never do the one thing we are supposed to do with those gifts—which is to share them with others. Jesus asked us to love God above all. You do that well when you are grateful. He also asked us to love others. You do that by living gratefully and allowing that gratitude to burst forth and shower others around you. It is gratitude for what God has done for us that stokes the desire to tell others about Him. All of it stems from gratitude.

My brothers, this week we focus on being grateful to God because He is a good, loving Father. Because it is right and just. Start by thanking God every morning in your prayer time for giving you life, for allowing you another day with your family. End your day with thanking Him for the things that happened, good and bad. Stop counting what's missing and look at all the small blessings you have been given. A virtuous man is a grateful man. So let's get to it. Start your day off determined to live it with a grateful mindset. I'll be praying for each of you. Please pray for me.





## WEEK 1: GRATITUDE AND GOD

# MAY 1, 2021

## THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

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"No duty is more urgent than that of returning thanks."

— St. Ambrose

 SAY THE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

## GOSPEL

JN 14:7-14

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"If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him." Philip said to him, "Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied." Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves. Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it."

**WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO ME IN THIS GOSPEL?**

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**ACTS OF GRATITUDE**  
**HOW HAVE I SHOWN MY GRATITUDE TO GOD TODAY?**

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## WEEK 1: GRATITUDE AND GOD

# MAY 2, 2021

## THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

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"In all created things discern the providence and wisdom of God, and in all things give Him thanks."

— St. Teresa of Avila

### SAY THE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

## GOSPEL

JN 15:1-8 FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

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"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower. He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples."

**WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO ME IN THIS GOSPEL?**

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**ACTS OF GRATITUDE**  
**HOW HAVE I SHOWN MY GRATITUDE TO GOD TODAY?**

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## WEEK 1: GRATITUDE AND GOD

# MAY 3, 2021

## THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

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"The best way to show my gratitude to God is to accept everything, even my problems, with joy."

— St. Teresa of Calcutta

### SAY THE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

## GOSPEL

JN 14:6-14 FEASTS OF SAINTS PHILIP AND JAMES, APOSTLES

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Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him." Philip said to him, "Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied." Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves. Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it."

**WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO ME IN THIS GOSPEL?**

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**ACTS OF GRATITUDE**  
**HOW HAVE I SHOWN MY GRATITUDE TO GOD TODAY?**

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## WEEK 1: GRATITUDE AND GOD

# MAY 4, 2021

## THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

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"O my God, let me remember with gratitude and confess to thee thy mercies toward me."

— St. Augustine of Hippo

 SAY THE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

## GOSPEL

### JN 14:27-31

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"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid. You heard me say to you, 'I am going away, and I am coming to you.' If you loved me, you would rejoice that I am going to the Father, because the Father is greater than I. And now I have told you this before it occurs, so that when it does occur, you may believe. I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming. He has no power over me; but I do as the Father has commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father. Rise, let us be on our way."



**WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO ME IN THIS GOSPEL?**

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**ACTS OF GRATITUDE**  
**HOW HAVE I SHOWN MY GRATITUDE TO GOD TODAY?**

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## WEEK 1: GRATITUDE AND GOD

# MAY 5, 2021

## THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

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“Get used to lifting your heart to God, in acts of thanksgiving, many times a day. Because he gives you this and that. Because you have been despised. Because you haven’t what you need or because you have. Thank him for everything, because everything is good.”

— St. Josemaria Escriva



### SAY THE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

## GOSPEL

JN 15:1-8

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“I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower. He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.”

**WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO ME IN THIS GOSPEL?**

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**ACTS OF GRATITUDE**  
HOW HAVE I SHOWN MY GRATITUDE TO GOD TODAY?

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## WEEK 1: GRATITUDE AND GOD

# MAY 6, 2021

## THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

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"The secret of happiness is to live moment by moment and to thank God for what He is send us every day in His goodness."

— St. Gianna Beretta Molla

 SAY THE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

## GOSPEL

### JN 15:9-11

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Jesus said to his disciples: "As the Father loves me, so I also love you. Remain in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and remain in his love. "I have told you this so that my joy might be in you and your joy might be complete."

**WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO ME IN THIS GOSPEL?**

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**ACTS OF GRATITUDE**  
**HOW HAVE I SHOWN MY GRATITUDE TO GOD TODAY?**

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## WEEK 1: GRATITUDE AND GOD

# MAY 7, 2021

## THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

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“Would that I could exhaust myself in acts of thanksgiving and gratitude towards this Divine Heart, for the great favor He shows us.”

— St. Margaret Mary Alacoque

 SAY THE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

## GOSPEL

### JN 15:12-17

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“This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I do not call you servants[a] any longer, because the servant[b] does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.”

**WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO ME IN THIS GOSPEL?**

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**ACTS OF GRATITUDE**  
HOW HAVE I SHOWN MY GRATITUDE TO GOD TODAY?

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## WEEK 2 REFLECTION:

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# GRATITUDE AND MY WIFE

*\*If you are not married and do not have children, use this week to continue to grow your relationship with God and your neighbor while praying for your future spouse and children.*

I would be completely lost without my wife, Angela. Let's be honest, without our wives, we'd all be lost. I'd constantly be looking for clean clothes in a pile of dirty ones. I would be living off of pizza rolls and Doritos. My kids would never be in the right place at the right time. I certainly wouldn't be in the place I am with my faith. Our wives do so much to keep our families on track, and they put up with a lot of junk from us along the way. They really are superheroes without a cape and they are such blessings in our lives.

The question is though, do we ever tell them that? I know I have caught myself many a time marveling at what a tremendous mother and wife Angela is. She works a full time job and is a full time mom and spouse. She is amazing at it even when she thinks she isn't. I know I have thought those things, but have I told her? Do we tell our wives how much we see them doing and how grateful we are for it? Or, do we go with the age old guys answer that, "they should know" we appreciate them? Every one of us likes to be thanked or to receive a word of gratitude. What makes us think our wives are any different?

So many times our spouses get what is left over from us. So many times they deal with the worst parts of us. Yet they still continue to show up. They still continue to forgive. God has truly given each one of us who has been blessed by marriage a gift. "It is not good for man to be alone," God said in Genesis 2:18. Man, was He right. So what are we going to do about it? How are we going to begin to practice and live out gratitude with our spouses? We are going to be intentional about it, that's how. You need to figure out what your wife's love language is. How does she like to be appreciated? What makes her feel loved? These are questions that we each have to care enough to find out. I know for Angela it isn't flowers or gifts. It isn't sweet nothings or lip service. It's acts of service. It's me taking the time to clean the house without being prodded. It's taking care of the little broken things around the house the first time I'm asked. It's volunteering to run the kids to all their events instead of letting her do it. Each of us has to care enough to figure out how our wives receive love and gratitude. It's through those efforts that they will feel appreciated.

So where do we start? This week, how about simply thanking God for your wife each and every morning? How about telling her how often you have neglected to let her know how much she is appreciated? Think about something you can do everyday to show her how grateful you are for her. Write her a note about all the things you are grateful for. Give her a night out with the girls. Take her on a date. Do the thing she has been after you forever to do. And no matter what you wind up doing, do it with a heart filled with gratitude. Our wives are the second most important relationship in our lives (after our relationship with God). It's time we started letting them know that by the way we treat them. Spend some time this week pondering over all the things your wife has done for you over the years. Let yourself feel the appreciation for those things. Gratitude and your wife, guys. Let's get to it.





## WEEK 2: GRATITUDE AND MY WIFE

# MAY 8, 2021

## THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

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“When it comes to life, the critical thing is whether you take things for granted or take them with gratitude.”

— G.K. Chesterton

 SAY THE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

## GOSPEL

### JN 15:18-21

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“If the world hates you, be aware that it hated me before it hated you. If you belonged to the world, the world would love you as its own. Because you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world—therefore the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you, ‘Servants are not greater than their master.’ If they persecuted me, they will persecute you; if they kept my word, they will keep yours also. But they will do all these things to you on account of my name, because they do not know him who sent me.”

**WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO ME IN THIS GOSPEL?**

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**ACTS OF GRATITUDE**  
**HOW HAVE I SHOWN MY GRATITUDE FOR MY WIFE TODAY?**

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## WEEK 2: GRATITUDE AND MY WIFE

# MAY 9, 2021

## THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

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"Remember the past with gratitude. Live the present with Enthusiasm. Look forward to the future with confidence."

— St. John Paul II

### SAY THE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

## GOSPEL

JN 15:9-17 SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

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"As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete. "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another."

# WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO ME IN THIS GOSPEL?

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## ACTS OF GRATITUDE

HOW HAVE I SHOWN MY GRATITUDE FOR MY WIFE TODAY?

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## WEEK 2: GRATITUDE AND MY WIFE

# MAY 10, 2021

## THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

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"Jesus does not demand great action from us but simply surrender and gratitude."

— St. Thérèse of Lisieux

 SAY THE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

## GOSPEL

JN 15:26—16:4A

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"When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who comes from the Father, he will testify on my behalf. You also are to testify because you have been with me from the beginning. "I have said these things to you to keep you from stumbling. They will put you out of the synagogues. Indeed, an hour is coming when those who kill you will think that by doing so they are offering worship to God. And they will do this because they have not known the Father or me. But I have said these things to you so that when their hour comes you may remember that I told you about them."

**WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO ME IN THIS GOSPEL?**

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**ACTS OF GRATITUDE**  
**HOW HAVE I SHOWN MY GRATITUDE FOR MY WIFE TODAY?**

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## WEEK 2: GRATITUDE AND MY WIFE

# MAY 11, 2021

## THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

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"If souls are humble, they will be moved to give thanks."

— St. Teresa of Avila

 SAY THE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

## GOSPEL

JN 16:5-11

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"But now I am going to him who sent me; yet none of you asks me, 'Where are you going?' But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your hearts. Nevertheless I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. And when he comes, he will prove the world wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment: about sin, because they do not believe in me; about righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you will see me no longer; about judgment, because the ruler of this world has been condemned."



# WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO ME IN THIS GOSPEL?

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## ACTS OF GRATITUDE

HOW HAVE I SHOWN MY GRATITUDE FOR MY WIFE TODAY?

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## WEEK 2: GRATITUDE AND MY WIFE

# MAY 12, 2021

## THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

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"I will give to the Lord the thanks due to his righteousness, and I will sing praise to the name of the Lord, the Most High."

— Psalm 7: 17

 SAY THE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

## GOSPEL

### JN 16:12-15

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"I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, because he will take what is mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is mine. For this reason I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you."

**WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO ME IN THIS GOSPEL?**

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**ACTS OF GRATITUDE**  
**HOW HAVE I SHOWN MY GRATITUDE FOR MY WIFE TODAY?**

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## WEEK 2: GRATITUDE AND MY WIFE

# MAY 13, 2021

## THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

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"I would maintain that thanks are the highest form of thought; and that gratitude is happiness doubled by wonder."

— G.K. Chesterton

 SAY THE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

## GOSPEL

### JN 16:16-20

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"A little while, and you will see me no more; again a little while, and you will see me." Some of his disciples said to one another, "What is this that he says to us, 'A little while, and you will not see me, and again a little while, and you will see me'; and, 'because I go to the Father'?" They said, "What does he mean by 'a little while'? We do not know what he means." Jesus knew that they wanted to ask him; so he said to them, "Is this what you are asking yourselves, what I meant by saying, 'A little while, and you will not see me, and again a little while, and you will see me'? Truly, truly, I say to you, you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice; you will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will turn into joy."

**WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO ME IN THIS GOSPEL?**

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**ACTS OF GRATITUDE**  
HOW HAVE I SHOWN MY GRATITUDE FOR MY WIFE TODAY?

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## WEEK 2: GRATITUDE AND MY WIFE

# MAY 14, 2021

## THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

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"Happiness can only be achieved by looking inward and learning to enjoy whatever life has and this requires transforming greed into gratitude."

— St. John Chrysostom

 SAY THE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

## GOSPEL

JN 15:9-17 FEAST OF SAINT MATTHIAS, APOSTLE

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"As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete. "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another."

**WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO ME IN THIS GOSPEL?**

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**ACTS OF GRATITUDE**  
**HOW HAVE I SHOWN MY GRATITUDE FOR MY WIFE TODAY?**

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## WEEK 3 REFLECTION:

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# GRATITUDE AND MY CHILDREN

*\*If you are not married and do not have children, use this week to continue to grow your relationship with God and your neighbor while praying for your future spouse and children.*

Angela and I have been blessed with three healthy, beautiful kids. Two of them, Allison and Katelyn, were even identical twins. Jacob, their older brother, is an amazing young man. The Lord has blessed our family tremendously with all three. I think about that often. I think about how many families are not able to physically have children. I think about how lucky we were to have three that were born perfectly healthy when so many are not. I think about how I couldn't imagine life without them. I have learned a lot of lessons being a father and I am thankful for everyone of them.

When asked who was the greatest in the kingdom of heaven, Jesus called a child over to Him and gave us the answer: children. Jesus told us that unless we become like children we will not enter the kingdom of heaven. This should be eye-opening for us. You may have heard the phrase, "the student has become the master." How true this often is in our relationship with our kids. I can't tell you how many times I have lost my temper and cussed at someone in traffic only to hear a little voice from the back seat say, "Daddy, Jesus wouldn't like that" or "Daddy that wasn't very nice." I can remember times where I was speaking uncharitably about someone and those same voices reminded me we are supposed to love everybody. I have received so many lessons in kindness, humility, forgiveness, and love from my children. They are constant reminders of the heart of Jesus, and we should be abundantly grateful for the lessons they teach us.

Much like our wives, our children can often go unappreciated. Many times, whether we want to admit it or not, our children can play second fiddle to our jobs and the busyness of life. Before long, they are older and involved in all sort of activities that run opposite to your busy work schedule. If we aren't careful, we can miss so much time with them. They are grown and gone in an instant, as many of you know. That is why it is so important to always look upon our kids with eyes of gratitude. We need to soak in and savor every moment we have with them, good and bad. We need to tell them often how proud of them we are. "I love you" should be words that they hear from us constantly. We should let them know how much they mean to us and how grateful we are for them everyday.

This week, my friends, is all about gratitude for our kids. We need to be covering them in our prayers. We need to thank God for them each and every day, if we aren't already. We should be doing something for each of them every day this week to show them how grateful we are for them. Spend time with them one on one. Take them individually to get ice cream or to do something you know they enjoy doing. If you are older and your kids are out of the house, then pick up the phone and call them or set up a lunch date at their favorite place. No matter what you do, go out of your way to show your kids how thankful you are for the blessing they are in your life. They are the reason you get to share in the name "Father" with God. They are the reason we were put here. God's first commandment in Genesis was to be fruitful and multiply. They make us whole. They make our lives complete and full of joy. It is time we make sure they know that.



## WEEK 3: GRATITUDE AND MY CHILDREN

# MAY 15, 2021

## THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

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"To be grateful is to recognize the love of God in everything."

— Thomas Merton

 SAY THE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

## GOSPEL

JN 16:23B-28

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"On that day you will ask nothing of me. Very truly, I tell you, if you ask anything of the Father in my name, he will give it to you. Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, so that your joy may be complete.

"I have said these things to you in figures of speech. The hour is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figures, but will tell you plainly of the Father. On that day you will ask in my name. I do not say to you that I will ask the Father on your behalf; for the Father himself loves you, because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God. I came from the Father and have come into the world; again, I am leaving the world and am going to the Father."

**WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO ME IN THIS GOSPEL?**

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**ACTS OF GRATITUDE**  
**HOW HAVE I SHOWN MY GRATITUDE FOR MY CHILDREN TODAY?**

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## WEEK 3: GRATITUDE AND MY CHILDREN

# MAY 16, 2021

## THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

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"Thank God ahead of time."

— **Bl. Solanus Casey**

 **SAY THE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

## GOSPEL

**MK 16:15-20**

SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER SOLEMNITY OF THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD.

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And he said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will accompany those who believe: in my name they will cast out demons; they will speak in new tongues; they will pick up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing, it will not hurt them; they will lay their hands on the sick, and they will recover."

So then the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God. And they went forth and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the message by the signs that attended it. Amen.

**WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO ME IN THIS GOSPEL?**

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**ACTS OF GRATITUDE**  
**HOW HAVE I SHOWN MY GRATITUDE FOR MY CHILDREN TODAY?**

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## WEEK 3: GRATITUDE AND MY CHILDREN

# MAY 17, 2021

## THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

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"Gratitude is the memory of the heart."

— St. Mary Euphrasia

 SAY THE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

## GOSPEL

### JN 16:29-33

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His disciples said, "Yes, now you are speaking plainly, not in any figure of speech! Now we know that you know all things, and do not need to have anyone question you; by this we believe that you came from God." Jesus answered them, "Do you now believe? The hour is coming, indeed it has come, when you will be scattered, each one to his home, and you will leave me alone. Yet I am not alone because the Father is with me. I have said this to you, so that in me you may have peace. In the world you face persecution. But take courage; I have conquered the world!"

**WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO ME IN THIS GOSPEL?**

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**ACTS OF GRATITUDE**  
**HOW HAVE I SHOWN MY GRATITUDE FOR MY CHILDREN TODAY?**

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## WEEK 3: GRATITUDE AND MY CHILDREN

# MAY 18, 2021

## THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

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"Gratitude is a flower that blooms in noble souls"

— Pope Francis

 SAY THE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

## GOSPEL

JN 17:1-11A

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After Jesus had spoken these words, he looked up to heaven and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify you, since you have given him authority over all people, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. I glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do. So now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had in your presence before the world existed.

"I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one."

**WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO ME IN THIS GOSPEL?**

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**ACTS OF GRATITUDE**  
**HOW HAVE I SHOWN MY GRATITUDE FOR MY CHILDREN TODAY?**

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## WEEK 3: GRATITUDE AND MY CHILDREN

# MAY 19, 2021

## THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

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"Gratitude is the seedbed of joy."

— Dr. Peter Kreeft

 SAY THE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

## GOSPEL

### JN 17:11B-19

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"And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one. While I was with them, I protected them in your name that you have given me. I guarded them, and not one of them was lost except the one destined to be lost, so that the scripture might be fulfilled. But now I am coming to you, and I speak these things in the world so that they may have my joy made complete in themselves. I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. I am not asking you to take them out of the world, but I ask you to protect them from the evil one. They do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, so that they also may be sanctified in truth."

**WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO ME IN THIS GOSPEL?**

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**ACTS OF GRATITUDE**  
**HOW HAVE I SHOWN MY GRATITUDE FOR MY CHILDREN TODAY?**

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## WEEK 3: GRATITUDE AND MY CHILDREN

# MAY 20, 2021

## THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

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"Thanksgiving is a special virtue. But ingratitude is opposed to Thanksgiving. Therefore ingratitude is a special sin."

— St. Thomas Aquinas



SAY THE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

## GOSPEL

JN 17:20-26

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"I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. Father, I desire that those also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory, which you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world. Righteous Father, the world does not know you, but I know you; and these know that you have sent me. I made your name known to them, and I will make it known, so that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them."

**WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO ME IN THIS GOSPEL?**

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**ACTS OF GRATITUDE**  
**HOW HAVE I SHOWN MY GRATITUDE FOR MY CHILDREN TODAY?**

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## WEEK 3: GRATITUDE AND MY CHILDREN

# MAY 21, 2021

## THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

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"Gratitude may be the first manifestation of a thinking, rational creature."

— Bl. Solanus Casey

 SAY THE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

## GOSPEL

### JN 21:15-19

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When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my lambs." A second time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Tend my sheep." He said to him the third time, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter felt hurt because he said to him the third time, "Do you love me?" And he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep. Very truly, I tell you, when you were younger, you used to fasten your own belt and to go wherever you wished. But when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will fasten a belt around you and take you where you do not wish to go." (He said this to indicate the kind of death by which he would glorify God.) After this he said to him, "Follow me."

**WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO ME IN THIS GOSPEL?**

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**ACTS OF GRATITUDE**  
**HOW HAVE I SHOWN MY GRATITUDE FOR MY CHILDREN TODAY?**

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## **WEEK 4 REFLECTION:**

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# **GRATITUDE AND MY NEIGHBOR**

We all know what Jesus thought about how we should treat our neighbor. He made that abundantly clear when He asked us to love our neighbor as ourselves. He also said to us, "Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me" (Mt 25:40). One of the greatest ways we can love our neighbor is to express our gratitude for them. We can be thankful for them. Our gratitude should be expressed in the way we treat them.

When was the last time you told your buddy how thankful you were for him and his presence in your life? When was the last time you looked your closest friends in the eye and told them you loved them? For some of us the answer to that question is probably never. For many men, saying those things is hard—especially when you are saying them to other men. There is an unwritten code between guys that the action of spending time with you should let you know that I am fond of you. It's that age old "I am a man and it's not manly to share things like that" type of sentiment. Well, I'd like to flip that sentiment on its head. To me, expressing your gratitude for others is one of the manliest things you can do. The vulnerability of sharing things like that with other men is often times one of the greatest gifts you can give another man. You not only share your appreciation and gratitude, but more often than not you open a door that had been barred shut in their life as well. In your vulnerable gratitude, you share a life lesson with your brother.

Gratitude towards others is sort of a lost art in today's world. So many people would love nothing more in their jobs and in their lives than to be appreciated. So many would like their efforts and their work to be humbly acknowledged. Just think about it. When is the last time you heard someone at work tell you you did a great job? When is the last time you told the bagger at the grocery store, "thank you"? When is the last time you saw a police officer or a fireman and thanked them for keeping your family safe? Have you ever taken a minute after Mass and thanked your priest for giving his life to the service of God and your family? We can spread so much good will, joy, and happiness just by taking a few minutes out of our day to go out of our way and say thank you to those around us. We all know what it feels like when people share words of gratitude with us or point out a difference we have made in their life. Take that familiar feeling and realize what a constant difference you could make in the lives of others by sharing that same blessing. This is something powerful and easy to do that would make an instant impact in the world.

My brothers, this week we are focusing our efforts to do just that. We need to have our radar up for opportunities to express our gratitude to those around us. No one is off the table. There should be ample opportunities each hour of the day to thank everyone around you. Just think of it as your 10 foot circle. People of all walks of life and circumstances will come in and out of that circle all day long. Look for ways this week to share a word of thanks and gratitude to those folks. Pray for them. Give them a fist bump or an "atta boy." Whatever you do, spend this week being aware of the blessing people are in your life and make sure and thank them for it.



## WEEK 4: GRATITUDE AND MY NEIGHBOR

# MAY 22, 2021

## THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

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“Out of gratitude and passion for Him, we ought to wish to be believed fools.”

— St. Ignatius of Loyola

 SAY THE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

## GOSPEL

### JN 21:20-25

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Peter turned and saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following them; he was the one who had reclined next to Jesus at the supper and had said, “Lord, who is it that is going to betray you?” When Peter saw him, he said to Jesus, “Lord, what about him?” Jesus said to him, “If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you? Follow me!” So the rumor spread in the community that this disciple would not die. Yet Jesus did not say to him that he would not die, but, “If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you?” This is the disciple who is testifying to these things and has written them, and we know that his testimony is true. But there are also many other things that Jesus did; if every one of them were written down, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.

**WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO ME IN THIS GOSPEL?**

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**ACTS OF GRATITUDE**  
**HOW HAVE I SHOWN MY GRATITUDE FOR MY NEIGHBOR TODAY?**

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## WEEK 4: GRATITUDE AND MY NEIGHBOR

# MAY 23, 2021

## THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

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"Here we touch on... one of the secrets of the spiritual life that also is one of the laws of happiness. The more we cultivate gratitude and thanksgiving, the more open our hearts are to God's action, so that we can receive life from God and be transformed and enlarged. By contrast, if we bury ourselves in discontent, permanent dissatisfaction, then our hearts close themselves insidiously against life, against God's gift."

— Fr. Jacques Philippe

 SAY THE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

## GOSPEL

JN 20:19-23 PENTECOST SUNDAY

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When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

**WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO ME IN THIS GOSPEL?**

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**ACTS OF GRATITUDE**  
**HOW HAVE I SHOWN MY GRATITUDE FOR MY NEIGHBOR TODAY?**

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## WEEK 4: GRATITUDE AND MY NEIGHBOR

# MAY 24, 2021

## THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

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“Gratefulness is the key to a happy life that we hold in our hands, because if we are not grateful, then no matter how much we have we will not be happy—because we will always want to have something else or something more.”

— Brother David Steindl-Rast

### SAY THE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

## GOSPEL

JN 19:25-34

MEMORIAL OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY, MOTHER OF THE CHURCH

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And that is what the soldiers did. Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, “Woman, here is your son.” Then he said to the disciple, “Here is your mother.” And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home. After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfill the scripture), “I am thirsty.” A jar full of sour wine was standing there. So they put a sponge full of the wine on a branch of hyssop and held it to his mouth. When Jesus had received the wine, he said, “It is finished.” Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit. Since it was the day of Preparation, the Jews did not want the bodies left on the cross during the sabbath, especially because that sabbath was a day of great solemnity. So they asked Pilate to have the legs of the crucified men broken and the bodies removed. Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who had been crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. Instead, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once blood and water came out.

**WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO ME IN THIS GOSPEL?**

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**ACTS OF GRATITUDE**  
**HOW HAVE I SHOWN MY GRATITUDE FOR MY NEIGHBOR TODAY?**

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## WEEK 4: GRATITUDE AND MY NEIGHBOR

# MAY 25, 2021

## THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

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

— 1 Thess. 5:18

 SAY THE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

## GOSPEL

MK 10:28-31

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Peter began to say to him, “Look, we have left everything and followed you.” Jesus said, “Truly I tell you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields, for my sake and for the sake of the good news, who will not receive a hundredfold now in this age—houses, brothers and sisters, mothers and children, and fields, with persecutions—and in the age to come eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and the last will be first.”

**WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO ME IN THIS GOSPEL?**

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**ACTS OF GRATITUDE**  
**HOW HAVE I SHOWN MY GRATITUDE FOR MY NEIGHBOR TODAY?**

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## WEEK 4: GRATITUDE AND MY NEIGHBOR

# MAY 26, 2021

## THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

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“Gratitude is a characteristic trait of the heart visited by the Holy Spirit; to obey God we must first remember his benefits.”

— Pope Francis



## GOSPEL

**MK 10:32-45** MEMORIAL OF SAINT PHILIP NERI, PRIEST

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They were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was walking ahead of them; they were amazed, and those who followed were afraid. He took the twelve aside again and began to tell them what was to happen to him, saying, “See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be handed over to the chief priests and the scribes, and they will condemn him to death; then they will hand him over to the Gentiles; they will mock him, and spit upon him, and flog him, and kill him; and after three days he will rise again.” James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came forward to him and said to him, “Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you.” And he said to them, “What is it you want me to do for you?” And they said to him, “Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory.” But Jesus said to them, “You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?” They replied, “We are able.” Then Jesus said to them, “The cup that I drink you will drink; and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized; but to sit at my right hand or at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared.”

When the ten heard this, they began to be angry with James and John. So Jesus called them and said to them, “You know that among the Gentiles those whom they recognize as their rulers lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. But it is not so among you; but whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be slave of all. For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many.”

**WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO ME IN THIS GOSPEL?**

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**ACTS OF GRATITUDE**  
**HOW HAVE I SHOWN MY GRATITUDE FOR MY NEIGHBOR TODAY?**

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## WEEK 4: GRATITUDE AND MY NEIGHBOR

# MAY 27, 2021

## THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

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"So great a love on the part of Mary deserves our gratitude, and that gratitude should be shown by at least meditating upon and pitying her in her sorrow."

— St. Alphonsus Liguori

 SAY THE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

## GOSPEL

### MARK 10:46-52

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They came to Jericho. As he and his disciples and a large crowd were leaving Jericho, Bartimaeus son of Timaeus, a blind beggar, was sitting by the roadside. When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout out and say, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" Many sternly ordered him to be quiet, but he cried out even more loudly, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" Jesus stood still and said, "Call him here." And they called the blind man, saying to him, "Take heart; get up, he is calling you." So throwing off his cloak, he sprang up and came to Jesus. Then Jesus said to him, "What do you want me to do for you?" The blind man said to him, "My teacher, let me see again." Jesus said to him, "Go; your faith has made you well." Immediately he regained his sight and followed him on the way.

**WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO ME IN THIS GOSPEL?**

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**ACTS OF GRATITUDE**  
**HOW HAVE I SHOWN MY GRATITUDE FOR MY NEIGHBOR TODAY?**

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## WEEK 4: GRATITUDE AND MY NEIGHBOR

# MAY 28, 2021

## THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

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"It seems to me, in light of the divine Goodness, ...that ingratitude is one of the things most worthy of detestation before our Creator and Lord, and before all creatures capable of divine and everlasting glory, out of all the evil and sins which can be imagined. For it is the failure to recognize the good things, the graces, and the gifts received. As such, it is the cause, beginning, and origin of all evil and sins"

— St. Ignatius of Loyola

### SAY THE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

## GOSPEL

### MK 11:11-26

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Then he entered Jerusalem and went into the temple; and when he had looked around at everything, as it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the twelve. On the following day, when they came from Bethany, he was hungry. Seeing in the distance a fig tree in leaf, he went to see whether perhaps he would find anything on it. When he came to it, he found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs. He said to it, "May no one ever eat fruit from you again." And his disciples heard it. Then they came to Jerusalem. And he entered the temple and began to drive out those who were selling and those who were buying in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves; and he would not allow anyone to carry anything through the temple. He was teaching and saying, "Is it not written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations'? But you have made it a den of robbers." And when the chief priests and the scribes heard it, they kept looking for a way to kill him; for they were afraid of him, because the whole crowd was spellbound by his teaching. And when evening came, Jesus and his disciples went out of the city. In the morning as they passed by, they saw the fig tree withered away to its roots. Then Peter remembered and said to him, "Rabbi, look! The fig tree that you cursed has withered." Jesus answered them, "Have faith in God. Truly I tell you, if you say to this mountain, 'Be taken up and thrown

Government	Percentage
Current government	85%
Previous government	15%

## This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

## HOW HAVE I SHOWN MY GRATITUDE FOR MY NEIGHBOR TODAY?

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# MAY 29, 2021

## THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

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"What most attracts God's grace is gratitude, because if we thank him for a gift, he is touched and hastens to give us ten more, and if we thank him again with the same enthusiasm, what an incalculable multiplication of graces! I have experienced this; try it yourself and you will see! My gratitude for everything he gives me is limitless, and I prove it to him in a thousand ways."

— St. Thérèse of Lisieux



SAY THE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

## GOSPEL

MK 11:27-33

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Again they came to Jerusalem. As he was walking in the temple, the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders came to him and said, "By what authority are you doing these things? Who gave you this authority to do them?" Jesus said to them, "I will ask you one question; answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things. Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin? Answer me." They argued with one another, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say, 'Why then did you not believe him?' But shall we say, 'Of human origin?'"—they were afraid of the crowd, for all regarded John as truly a prophet. So they answered Jesus, "We do not know." And Jesus said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things."

## WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO ME IN THIS GOSPEL?

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins or other markings on the paper.

## ACTS OF GRATITUDE

## HOW HAVE I SHOWN MY GRATITUDE TODAY?

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# MAY 30, 2021

## THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

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"Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever."

— 1 Chronicles 16:34

 SAY THE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

## GOSPEL

MT 28:16-20 SOLEMNITY OF THE MOST HOLY TRINITY

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Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

**WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO YOU IN THIS GOSPEL?**

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**ACTS OF GRATITUDE**  
HOW HAVE I SHOWN MY GRATITUDE TODAY?

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# MAY 31, 2021

## THOUGHTS FROM THE CHURCH

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"It is truly right and just, our duty and salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Father most holy, through your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, your Word through whom you made all things, whom you sent as our Savior and Redeemer, incarnate by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin. Fulfilling your will and gaining for you a holy people, he stretched out his hands as he endured his Passion, so as to break the bonds of death and manifest the resurrection."

— Preface to Eucharistic Prayer II



SAY THE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

## GOSPEL

LK 1:39-56 FEAST OF THE VISITATION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

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In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be[a] a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."

And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.

He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever." And Mary remained with her about three months and then returned to her home.

**WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO YOU IN THIS GOSPEL?**

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**ACTS OF GRATITUDE**  
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# LITANY OF HUMILITY

O Jesus! meek and humble of heart,  
**Hear me.**

From the desire of being esteemed,  
**Deliver me, Jesus.**

From the desire of being loved,  
**Deliver me, Jesus.**

From the desire of being extolled,  
**Deliver me, Jesus.**

From the desire of being honored ,  
**Deliver me, Jesus.**

From the desire of being praised,  
**Deliver me, Jesus.**

From the desire of being preferred  
to others,  
**Deliver me, Jesus.**

From the desire of being consulted,  
**Deliver me, Jesus.**

From the desire of being approved,  
**Deliver me, Jesus.**

From the fear of being humiliated,  
**Deliver me, Jesus.**

From the fear of being despised,  
**Deliver me, Jesus.**

From the fear of suffering rebukes,  
**Deliver me, Jesus.**

From the fear of being calumniated,  
**Deliver me, Jesus.**

From the fear of being forgotten,  
**Deliver me, Jesus.**

From the fear of being ridiculed,  
**Deliver me, Jesus.**

From the fear of being wronged,  
**Deliver me, Jesus.**

From the fear of being suspected,  
**Deliver me, Jesus.**

That others may be loved more than I,  
**Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.**

That others may be esteemed more than I,  
**Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.**

That, in the opinion of the world, others  
may increase and I may decrease,  
**Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.**

That others may be chosen and I set aside,  
**Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.**

That others may be praised and  
I unnoticed,

**Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.**

That others may be preferred to me  
in everything,

**Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.**

That others may become holier than I,  
provided that I may become as holy as  
I should,

**Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.**

# THE LITANY OF TRUST

From the belief that I have to earn  
Your love,

**Deliver me, Jesus.**

From the fear that I am unlovable,

**Deliver me, Jesus.**

From the false security that I have what  
it takes,

**Deliver me, Jesus.**

From the fear that trusting You will leave  
me more destitute,

**Deliver me, Jesus.**

From all suspicion of Your words  
and promises,

**Deliver me, Jesus.**

From the rebellion against childlike  
dependency on You,

**Deliver me, Jesus.**

From refusals and reluctances in  
accepting Your will,

**Deliver me, Jesus.**

From anxiety about the future,

**Deliver me, Jesus.**

From resentment or excessive  
preoccupation with the past,

**Deliver me, Jesus.**

From restless self-seeking  
in the present moment,

**Deliver me, Jesus.**

From disbelief in Your love and presence,

**Deliver me, Jesus.**

From the fear of being asked to give  
more than I have,

**Deliver me, Jesus.**

From the belief that my life has no  
meaning or worth,

**Deliver me, Jesus.**

From the fear of what love demands,

**Deliver me, Jesus.**

From discouragement,

**Deliver me, Jesus.**

That You are continually holding me  
sustaining me, loving me,

**Jesus, I trust in you.**

That Your love goes deeper than my sins  
and failings, and transforms me,

**Jesus, I trust in you.**

That not knowing what tomorrow brings is  
an invitation to lean on You,

**Jesus, I trust in you.**

That you are with me in my suffering,

**Jesus, I trust in you.**

That my suffering, united to Your own, will  
bear fruit in this life and the next,

**Jesus, I trust in you.**

That You will not leave me orphan, that You  
are present in Your Church,

**Jesus, I trust in you.**

That Your plan is better than anything else,

**Jesus, I trust in you.**

That You always hear me and in Your  
goodness always respond to me,

**Jesus, I trust in you.**

That You give me the grace to accept  
forgiveness and to forgive others,

**Jesus, I trust in you.**

That You give me all the strength I need for  
what is asked,

**Jesus, I trust in you.**

That my life is a gift,

**Jesus, I trust in you.**

That You will teach me to trust You,

**Jesus, I trust in you.**

That You are my Lord and my God,

**Jesus, I trust in you.**

That I am Your beloved one,

**Jesus, I trust in you.**

# PRAYER TO SAINT JOSEPH

To you, O blessed Joseph, do we come in our tribulation, and having implored the help of your most holy Spouse, we confidently invoke your patronage also. Through that charity which bound you to the Immaculate Virgin Mother of God and through the paternal love with which you embraced the Child Jesus, we humbly beg you graciously to regard the inheritance which Jesus Christ has purchased by his Blood, and with your power and strength to aid us in our necessities. O most watchful guardian of the Holy Family, defend the chosen children of Jesus Christ; O most loving father, ward off from us every contagion of error and corrupting influence; O our most mighty protector, be kind to us and from heaven assist us in our struggle with the power of darkness. As once you rescued the Child Jesus from deadly peril, so now protect God's Holy Church from the snares of the enemy and from all adversity; shield, too, each one of us by your constant protection, so that, supported by your example and your aid, we may be able to live piously, to die in holiness, and to obtain eternal happiness in heaven. Amen.



A photograph of two men sitting at a wooden table in a cafe. The man on the left is wearing a blue plaid shirt and holding a red mug. The man on the right is wearing a grey sweater and gesturing with his hands while talking. In the background, there are shelves with books, a sign that says 'LOCAL', and a window with 'WB90' on it. The bottom of the image has a blue and yellow curved graphic.

## DON'T LET SEXUAL SIN HOLD BACK YOUR GROWTH

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