



Small Group Newsletter
St. Mary of the Visitation Parish
Cambridge, (H) ONT.



27th SUNDAY
IN ORDINARY TIME
October 7th, 2018

Introduction to the Word:

On the heels of our Message Series “Made for Monday”, it seems appropriate that we pause on Thanksgiving Weekend, because Gratitude is a key principle of a Disciple of Jesus – and a crucial element of lived Discipleship everyday – even on

Monday. As a people who know that Sunday Matters, we are called to make *Gratitude a “habit of the soul.”*

Warm-up Activity: (5-10 minutes)

Discuss together some things you are grateful for in your faith life and your family life? How do you express gratitude? What expressions of gratitude seem to ring true for you the most in your life?

Let us pray together our Heart to Home Prayer:

*God Our Heavenly Father, we long to make our thoughts your thoughts,
and our ways your ways. As we prepare with attentive mind and open heart
to hear your Word Lord, we long to be empowered with your Spirit
so that we may bring your Word to our families, our parish and our communities.
This, our prayer, we make through the intercession of Our Lady of the Visitation and in name of
Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.*

GOSPEL (John 15: 9-17) (alternative for Thanksgiving)

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John. **Glory to you, Lord.**

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 may be in you and your joy might be complete. This is my commandment: love one another as I love 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 no longer call you slaves, because a slave does not know what his master is doing. I have called you friends, because I have told you everything I have heard from my Father. It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will remain, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name he may give you. This I command you: love one another."

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.**



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Listen to the Message

Reflection:

Think for a moment, if you will, of someone you know who is truly happy. We've all met those who seem to radiate happiness. They seem to smile more than others; they laugh more than others—just being around them makes us happier as well. Now think of someone you know who isn't happy at all. Perhaps they seem 10 years older than they are, drained of energy—perhaps they are angry or bitter or depressed. What is the difference between them? What are the characteristics that differentiate the happy from the miserable? Is there something that unhappy people can do to be happier? I believe there is. It is that one person has chosen to allow their gratitude to be reflective of the sum of circumstances, while the other person has determined to ensure that gratitude is a habit of their soul.

As our message this weekend reminded us, we are not the sum of the events of our life, but we are followers of the Son who is in all of the events of our life. Our choice each day is the see Him, and learn from the moments we miss Him. What will happen if we commit to this is that we will become grateful for His unwavering presence in our life, to the degree that we not only abide (remain) with Him, that we will not only accept the title of “friend” from God, but also that we develop within our soul – a habit of gratitude - which penetrates all elements of who we are. In other words, we end up radiating gratitude! So are you the sum, or are you of the Son?

Questions for Discussion: (15-20 minutes)

- Read aloud Saint John Paul 's words from 2002 – what do they mean to you and how can you engage them in your life *“We are not the sum of our weaknesses and failures; we are the sum of the Father's love for us and our real capacity to become the image of his Son.”*
- Everyone, as our story in the message about our Special Friends reminded us, expresses gratitude (thanksgiving) uniquely. Discuss together some ways you have seen people express gratitude – what struck you about it?
- As you ponder your own “state of life”.... How can you grow in developing “gratitude as a habit of the soul”?

Moving Forward in Prayer (15-20 minutes)

This time is reserved for quiet prayer as well as for an action-response to the communal reflections. You may wish to create and add petitions of prayer at this time. It is also intended to provide moments to “outreach” to the community.

- As a group have you signed up to be involved in doing a local Service Saturday activity together (October 27th).
- Consider together as a group a social outreach which connects to our parish – our Haiti or Kenya Missions, bringing “Canadian Tire Dollars”, making quilts, being part of “Milk Bags for Haiti”, collecting items for local Outreach (De Mazenod Door, Hamilton or Blanket Brigade.)
- Consider making a Holy Hour for the intentions of our parish community this week.

Leader: Let us seek the intercession of the Patroness of our Parish as we pray: [Hail Mary](#)