

John's about 35 years old, and has returned from a men's retreat weekend. While away he realizes that he's never told his father he loves him, so he decides when he gets home he's going to do it. Once the car is unpacked, John picks up the phone and calls home. His dad answers the phone.

"Hi Dad, it's me."

"Oh, um, hi son! I'll go get your mother..."

"No don't get mom. It's you I want to talk to."

There's a pause then, "Why John? Do you need money?"

"No, dad. It's just I've been remembering a lot about you, and the things you did for me, working all those years to put me through college, supporting us. My life is going well now and it's because of what you did! You get me started in life. I just thought about it and realized I'd never really said 'Thanks...'"

Now there's silence on the other end of the phone. The son continues

"I want to tell you thanks, and that I love you pop!"

"Son, have you been drinking?..."

Last week, Jesus gave us a no nonsense example of a master who expects his servants to do their work without having to thank them for simply doing their duty. Discipleship is its own reward. Faith converts us into servants who do what's necessary – love, give witness, repent, forgive – no matter how hard the task, and to expect **NOTHING** in return!

Today our readings speak to the message of giving thanks, or simply put GRATITUDE! In the first reading, **NAY- uh-muhn** the Syrian expresses his gratitude to the God of Israel after being healed of his leprosy. The Gospel presents the story of the cure of the ten lepers, one who was a Samaritan. Only the Samaritan (an outsider by nature) returned to give thanks to Jesus. He realized Jesus was not only his healer but his Savior as well. My question is, do we notice the blessings of God in our everyday lives like NAY-uh-muhn and the Samaritan?

For example, do we show gratitude for our parents, who gave us life, food, shelter, clothing and education and, maybe by their love gave us a sense of self worth? Do we show gratitude for the friendships we have, those people who we don't have to be on guard with, who've stood by us no matter what? What about our teachers in school or mentors at work? Do we show gratitude to our spouses or companions who listen to our troubles, fears, and joys? Do we show gratitude to God for our intelligence, our charisms, or the gifts of our senses; sight, smell, taste, and hearing?

Just over one year ago I was ordained to the permanent Diaconate, and was assigned to St Edith. I had many fears and anxieties about this new journey. Would I fit in, would people like me, and would I be accepted? Well, today I wish to express my gratitude for you, the community of St Edith. I wish to thank you all for welcoming me and making me comfortable. I wish to thank you for allowing me to be a part of your lives, sharing in your joys, sorrows, memories of loved ones present and past, and the excitement of those lives that will be arriving soon. I want to thank you for helping me become the Deacon I am today. Thank you Father Jim for your guidance and wisdom shared over the years we've know one another. I truly cannot envision being anywhere else!

As we go forward this week, let us remember to be thankful for EVERYTHING! Remember the difference between hope and optimism. Optimism says that everything is going to turn out okay. Hope tells us that however it turns out will be okay.

## Be Thankful

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**Be thankful that you don't already have everything you desire ... if you did, what would there be to look forward to?**

**Be thankful when you don't know something ... for it gives you the opportunity to learn.**

**Be thankful for the difficult times ... during those times you grow.**

**Be thankful for your limitations ... they give you opportunities for improvement.**

**Be thankful for each new challenge... which will build your strength and character.**

**Be thankful for your mistakes ... they will teach you valuable lessons.**

**Be thankful when you're tired and weary ... because it means you've given your all.**

**It's easy to be thankful for the 'good' things ... yet, a life of rich fulfillment comes to those who are thankful for the setbacks.**

**Gratitude can turn a negative into a positive ... find a way to be thankful for your troubles and they can become your blessings.**

28<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time C  
2 Kings 5:14-17 and Luke 17:11-19  
Deacon Don Esler

## **Author Unknown**