



Our Service, Our Gratitude

And whatever you do, in word or in deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him. (Colossians 3:17)

The sense of gratitude is deeply practiced and experienced in our lives.

In Canada's national thanksgiving in October, we spend every second Monday in gratitude for the unifying diversity among its people, its nature's richness, the long tradition of being there for the rest of the world and much more. We take appreciation for support to charity groups' lofty causes. With this also month of Holy Rosary, we speak in this prayer of the world the Blessed Virgin Mary's thanking the Lord through accepting His plan of salvation, and also, by responding to her exhortation, thank the Mother of Empathy for her intercessions on our behalf. We celebrate the Liturgy through Holy Eucharist – traced to first Christians' thanksgiving. Through prayers, we ask for grace, for forgiveness and for healing as well as give thanks for our family's well-being and unity, mercy and love, and health and restoration. We thank Him for the gift of unbounded love... the gift of faith and wisdom... the gift of the spirit of fraternity...the gift of joy for making the world a better place.

A deep place in our hearts is the enduring Vincentian service which by itself is thanksgiving. Our mission of *living the Gospel message by serving Christ in the poor with love, respect, justice and joy* is one of gratitude for the blessings – time, talents and those values, among others, through willingly sharing those same gifts with our neighbours-in-need. When we help our brothers and sisters through their struggles ... listen to their stories and hopes, and share their joys in the midst of deprivation and marginalization, we return our Lord's kindness. Not a few Vincentians experience thanked by neighbours-in-need beyond words for our attention and understanding during home visits, sometimes in emotional way. In our quiet inner selves, we feel blessed, even changed, and just as thankful for living out the Gospel message of serving those in need.

In Vincentian tradition, gratitude moves us further to actions and advocacies, to become better stewards of His gifts by leading and collaborative thinking, to continue working for others and His glorification as we walk in the path to holiness.

At the end of the journey, meeting Him face to face, will we say thank you for the biggest gift – the gift of life - and will He welcome us into eternal life and thank us, too, for the life we gave?

Psalm 137 says *Let my tongue be silenced if I ever forget You. And if I were to add... and not thank You every day of my life.*

Reflection Questions

1. What are those you are most thankful for? Do your thoughts and actions toward others genuinely reflect gratitude to Him?
2. How can you bring more gratitude into your life? How can you better show your gratefulness for many blessings received, including living our faith in action?

Let us pray... All-loving God, grant us the grace to find more ways to respond with gratitude and humility, expanding our minds and hearts to many who do not have same gifts we have, and those who are pushed to the edges of society. We thank You for the continuing gifts of encounter, resolve and witness to Your compassion and friendship.

Jose I. Torres, National Spirituality Committee Chair

For those interested in contributing spiritual reflections, please email jose.torres@rogers.com. Also, for reflections that may be used in your group meeting's spirituality segment, please check out: [Monthly Reflections - Society of Saint Vincent de Paul - National Council of Canada](#)