

We Remember and We Are Grateful

Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God.

A Letter of Gratitude

(Philippians 1: 3 – 11)

I thank my God whenever I think of you; and every time I pray for you, I pray with joy, remembering how you have helped to spread the Good News from the day you first heard it right up to the present. I am quite certain that the One who began this good work in you will see that it is finished when the Day of Christ Jesus comes. It is only natural that I should feel like this towards you all, since you have shared the privileges which have been mine: both my chains and my work defending and establishing the gospel. You have a permanent place in my heart, and God knows how much I miss you all, loving you as Christ Jesus loves you. My prayer is that your love for each other may increase more and more and never stop improving your knowledge and deepening your perception so that you can always recognize what is best. This will help you to become pure and blameless, and prepare you for the Day of Christ, when you will reach the perfect goodness which Jesus Christ produces in us for the glory and praise of God.

A Prayer of Gratitude

God of Light and Goodness,
We give thanks for your saving power,
 working through the lives of men and women around the world,
 working throughout history.
We give thanks that your activity, whether hidden or apparent,
 continues in the stories of every human being.
We give thanks that you love each of us so much that you want to be
 intimately involved in our lives, drawing us ever closer to you.
In the midst of our “busy-ness” it is hard to notice you.
 We think it is up to us and us alone to fulfill the tasks before us.
And, when things do not go as we wish them to go,
 we get discouraged and feel alienated from you.
Yet, when we stop to look back at the events of our lives,
 it all comes clear:
You were with us every step of the way,
 Sometimes guiding us with your wisdom,
 Sometimes standing beside us as our companion,
 Sometimes lifting us up when we fell.

Your love and care are mediated through the people we meet.
Your will is manifested in daily events –
 especially in the needs of those around us.
Our lives are filled with unanticipated twists and turns,
 Unexpected gifts and challenges
 That, at first glance, appear to be random or haphazard;
Yet when we look back, we recognize them for what they are:
 all instruments of your abiding and creative love.
For your saving and loving action in our lives, we thank you, Lord!

The Gentle Yet Persistent Presence of God

(Words from the Founder)

It was, because of these two events, the encounter with Monsieur Nyel and the proposal made to me by this lady (Madame de Croyeres), that I began to take care of the school for boys. I had not thought of doing this before, but not because others had not suggested that I do such work. Several friends of Monsieur Roland had tried to inspire me in this direction, but the work had no appeal for me, and I did not feel inclined toward it. And if I had ever thought that the care I took of the school masters, simply out of charity, would impose on me the duty of living with them, I would have stopped doing this. For, naturally, I ranked lower than my valet those whom I was forced to employ in the schools, particularly in the beginning, and the very thought that it would be necessary to live with them would have been insupportable to me.”

Apparently, then, it was for this reason that God, who directs all things with wisdom and gentleness, and who is not accustomed to force the wills of [persons], but who wanted to lead me to take complete direction of the schools, did this, in a very imperceptible manner, and over a period of time, so that one commitment led me into the next one without my having foreseen this in the beginning.

A Litany of Thanksgiving

Leader: Lord, we thank you for your many blessings in our lives, especially the friendship and example of many people. We remember and bring these people to prayer now...(pause to remember significant persons) For all these people...

All: **We thank you, Lord!**

Leader: Lord, we thank you for the gifts that you have loved into us – gifts that we pray to use generously in service to others, especially those most in need...(pause to call to mind our personal gifts and talents) For all these gifts...

All; **We thank you, Lord!**

Leader: We thank you for drawing us closer to you through the life and example of Saint John Baptist de La Salle, the Brothers of the Christian Schools, and other significant Lasallians in our lives...(pause to remember particular Brothers and colleagues) For these exemplary people...

All: **We thank you, Lord!**

We Close Our Prayer Together (from *My Grandfather's Blessings*, by Dr. Rachel Naomi Remen)

Days pass and the years vanish
and we walk sightless among miracles.
Lord, fill our eyes with seeing and our minds with knowing.
Let there be moments when your Presence,
like lightning,
illuminates the darkness in which we walk.
Help us to see,
wherever we gaze,
that the bush burns, unconsumed.
And we, clay touched by God,
will reach out for holiness
and exclaim in wonder,
"How filled with awe is this place and we did not know it."

Saint John Baptist de La Salle...Pray for us!
Live, Jesus, in our hearts...Forever!