

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

Dear Parishioners,

One of my favorite expressions is **"God is good!"** This expression is a statement of thanksgiving directed to our Lord for his goodness to us. It also has a nice response to be used by those who agree. The response is **"All the time!"** So for people who like to celebrate the goodness of God, we share our joy in His goodness to us by saying "God is good" and responding "All the time!"

It has also become a favorite expression for those of us who gather on Thursday evenings to celebrate the Holy Spirit. Simply saying it to one another brings us joy. That is the fascinating thing about expressing gratitude to the Lord and to others. It brings joy into our lives. As the article below testifies, the practice of saying "thank you" is a powerful means to happiness.

The season of Christmas, which we will soon be celebrating, is known as the season of joy because we give thanks for what the Lord has done in sending us His Son, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, to be our Savior. So I urge you to praise and thank the Lord frequently, not only because He deserves it, but it will bring joy into your lives. Remember – **"God is good! All the time!"**

With my prayers,
Fr. Conley

Surprising Power of Thank You by Jon Gordon

"Thank you." These are two words that have the power to transform our health, happiness, performance, and success. Research tells us grateful people are happier and more likely to maintain good friendships. It **reduces stress**, improves our sleep, and floods our bodies with endorphins that energize us, instead of hormones that leave us feeling drained and depleted.

Gratitude and appreciation are also essential for a healthy work environment. In fact, the number one reason why people leave their jobs is that they don't feel appreciated. A simple thank you and a show of appreciation can make all the difference. That's why it's important not only to practice gratitude yourself but also to foster a culture of gratitude with your team and organization.

Thankfully, gratitude is like a muscle. The more we do with it the stronger it gets. In this spirit here are five ways to put the power of "thank you" to work today:

1. Take a daily thank you walk

I started this practice fifteen years ago and it has changed my life. It's simple, it's powerful, and it's a great way to feed yourself with positivity. How does it work? You simply take a ten-to-thirty minute walk outside, in a mall, around your office, on a treadmill, or *anywhere else you can think of* and think about all the things—big and small—you are grateful for.

When you combine gratitude with physical exercise you give yourself a double boost of positive energy. You

flood your brain and body with positive emotions and natural antidepressants that uplift you rather than the stress hormones that drain your energy and slowly kill you.

2. Practice meal-time thank you's

When having a meal with your friends and family or coworkers, go around the table and have each person say what they are thankful for. Encourage people to expand on why they are thankful. Not only will this help frame the meal towards a positive perspective, it's also an opportunity for you to get to know each other better by understanding what each other values.

3. Make a gratitude visit

Martin Seligman, the **father of positive psychology**, suggests we write a letter expressing our gratitude to someone. Then we visit this person and read them the letter. His research shows that people who do this are measurably happier and less depressed a month later.

Yes, it might feel odd—but it works. Try it. Today schedule and make a gratitude visit to an old boss or mentor, a friend who helped you through a tough time, a family member or someone who made a difference in your life.

4. Say thank you at work

According to a **John Templeton study** of 2,000 Americans, we are *least likely* to feel or express gratitude at work. And when we're listing what we're grateful for, our jobs come in dead last. It doesn't have to be like that.

When Doug Conant was CEO of Campbell Soup he wrote approximately 30,000 thank you notes to his employees and energized the company in the process. Leaders can energize and engage their teams by letting them know you are grateful for them and their work.

Organizations spend billions of dollars collectively on recognition programs. But the best and cheapest recognition program of all consists of a sincere "thank you." And of course, don't forget to say thank you to your clients and customers too.

5. Be positively contagious

Research shows that **emotions are contagious**. Sincere smiles, kind words, encouragement, praise and positive energy infect people in a positive way. On the flip side, your people are just as likely to catch your bad mood as the flu.

So each day you come to work you have a choice: You can be a germ or a big dose of Vitamin C. When you choose to be positively contagious your positive energy has a positive impact on your colleagues and ultimately your culture. Your team will remember very little of what you said, but they will remember 100 percent of how you made them feel.

6. Celebrate daily success

According to research conducted at Harvard University, the last thirty minutes of every waking day is recorded and replayed that night by our subconscious minds fifteen to seventeen times. This replay occurs five times more often than any other thought at any other time. Thus it's important to go to bed thinking positive thoughts. If you go to bed thinking and feeling like a champion you'll wake up thinking and feeling like a champion, optimistic and ready to win.

Today, before you go to bed, celebrate your success of the day. Identify the one great thing about your day—the one great conversation, accomplishment, or win that you are most proud of. Or, identify the one person you helped most today or the one thing that made you smile. Focus on your success, and look forward to creating more success tomorrow.

If you have kids, make sure you do this with them to help foster the kind of gratitude that will fuel a lifetime of significance and success.

COME CELEBRATE THE TRUE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS – THE HOLY SPIRIT-WHO MADE IT ALL POSSIBLE!

We will have a celebration on Thursday, December 28 from 6:30- 9 PM of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit we have received in our parish this year. A special invitation is extended to all of those who participated in our Life in the Spirit series as well as those who continue to come to our Thursday night gatherings. If you can join us, please let Father Conley know at frconley@comcast.net or 301-870-2220, extension 13. Come Holy Spirit, bring us Jesus!

CATHOLIC QUOTES

I can only offer very little things to God. These little sacrifices bring great peace of soul, but I often let the chance of making them slip by. However, it does not discourage me. I put up with having a little less peace, and try to be more careful the next time.
St. Therese

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE RAFFLE

WINNERS: \$4500 winner was Chris Weeks, of Hughesville, MD and \$1000 winner was Sandy Hudson of Woodbridge, VA. The next drawing will be on December 18.

SCHEDULE FOR CHRISTMAS TIME MASSES AND CONFESSIONS

Saturday, December 23

Confessions 8:30 AM and Mass at 9 AM

Confessions at 2:30 PM

4 PM Vigil Mass for the Fourth Sunday of Advent

Sunday, December 24

Morning Mass 8 and 10 AM

There will not be a 12 noon Mass

MASSES FOR CHRISTMAS EVE

4 PM Children's Mass

8 PM Choral Mass

Prelude begins at 7:30

MASSES FOR CHRISTMAS DAY

8 AM and 10 AM

Please note that there will not be a morning Mass

on Tuesday, December 26

MASSES FOR THE WEEKEND OF DECEMBER 30- JANUARY 1

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 30

Confessions 8:30 AM and Mass at 9 AM

Confessions at 3 PM and Mass at 4 PM

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31

Masses at 8 AM, 10 AM and 12 noon

4 PM Vigil Mass for the Solemn Feast of Mary,

Mother of God

MONDAY, JANUARY 1

Masses at 8 AM, 10 AM, and 12 noon

MASS INTENTIONS FOR THIS WEEK:

SUN: 8am Wilfrid Costello, 10am Ana Lopez,

12N: Parishioners, **MON:** 8am Jennifer Christine

Long, **TUES:** 8am Joyce Wood, **WED:** 8am Mary Ann

Higgs, **THURS:** 8am Don Pobst, **FRI:** 9:30am Paul

Istvan, **SAT:** 9am Donald Lawson, 4pm Janine Burch.

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR DAILY

PRAYERS: Mary Bowes, Frances Card, Joe Cross, Kendall Farrell, George Fassel, Arlene Gandolfi, Martha Gehring, Judy Istvan-Windsor, Angie Kalnasy, Regina Kijesky, Marie Knobel, Lillian Komar, Susie Logan, Maurice Long, Liz Marcus, Mary Emma Middleton, Larry Miller, Joseph Mona, Wayne Mullings, Lenora Proctor, Joseph Quade, Sylvene Savoy, William Leon Savoy, Edna Sweeney, Lisa Thompson, Beth Weise, Tim Welch, Brice Zimmer.

OFFERTORY COLLECTION LAST WEEKEND,

\$9988.05. Of the 770 registered households in the parish, we received donations from 252 identifiable contributors (55% of the parish) using envelopes or checks. The unidentified donations totaled \$552.05.

We received \$40.00 for our School Support.