28th Sunday in Ordinary Time – October 11, 2026

One of the beautiful things about Thanksgiving weekend is that it for most of us, no matter what we are doing. It gives us an opportunity to stop, if just for a moment, and recognize just how much we have to be thankful for. For some, Thanksgiving will mean gathering with family, sharing a wonderful meal, and enjoying time together. For others, it may be a quieter weekend. And for some, especially those who have experienced the loss of a loved one, or loneliness, or illness, or some kind of hardship – finding reasons to be thankful may not come quite so easily – but they are still there.

Thanksgiving invites all of us to consider this: gratitude isn't simply about being thankful when life is good. It's about recognizing the goodness of God in the midst of life, whatever our circumstances may be.

Last weekend, we reflected that EVERYTHING IN LIFE IS GIFT. In today's Gospel, Jesus tells a parable about a king who's prepared a spectacular wedding banquet for his son. Everything's ready – the food, the tables set – the invitations have gone out. But the invited guests refuse to come. Some are too busy with their work – others simply can't be bothered. They've received this amazing invitation, but many fail to appreciate what's being offered. And I wonder whether, sometimes, we do the very same thing with God when it comes to our faith in Him.

If we stop and think about what God has given us – what do we give back, what do we offer in return? We've been given the gift of life itself and the people who love us. The opportunities we have been given. The beauty of creation itself. The blessings we enjoy, sometimes without even noticing them. And beyond all these things, God has given us the greatest gift of all: His Son, Jesus Christ, who offers us forgiveness, salvation, redemption, and the promise of eternal life – not

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just once but every time we ask for it and do a little bit in return. Everything we have is a gift and everything start with God's generosity.

It's easy in our busyness to become like the first set of guests. So taken up with our responsibilities, our worries, our plans, and sometimes our disappointments that we forget to recognize the One who has blessed us so abundantly. We can spend so much time thinking about what we don't have that we overlook what we do have. Of seeing what's going wrong that we forget to appreciate what's going right. And we can become so accustomed to God's goodness that we begin to just take it for granted.

The tragedy of those invited guests wasn't that they had nothing to celebrate. It was that they failed to live in the moment and recognize the precious invitation they'd received. Perhaps a lesson for us all.

Gratitude begins when we stop taking God's gifts for granted and Christian gratitude goes one step further than simply recognizing our blessings – it calls us to respond. Think about the people in your life who've made a difference. Parents who sacrificed for us, spouses who've stood beside us, friends who've helped us through difficult times, someone showing us kindness when we needed it most.

When we truly appreciate what someone has done for us, we naturally want to respond with love, generosity & kindness. The same should be true of our relationship with God. We respond to His generosity by making time for Him in prayer, by gathering around His table at the Eucharist, by sharing our blessings with those in need, and by treating others with the same generosity that God has shown us. We show love and kindness by giving that to others – God's asking for us to repay Him by giving to others.

Eucharist mean Thanksgiving, and so every time we come for Mass – it's not just about what we get out of it, what we receive – but we come

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for thanksgiving, to thank God for everything He has already given us, especially the gift of Jesus.

And so, this Thanksgiving weekend, I would invite each of us to take time, perhaps around your Thanksgiving table or in the quiet of your home, and name three things for which you are genuinely grateful. Not simply the obvious blessings, but perhaps the people, experiences, or even the difficulties through which God has helped you grow. And ask yourself one more question: How am I responding to the goodness of God in my life?

The greatest expression of gratitude is not simply saying thank you. It is living a life that reflects gratitude.

The king in today's Gospel prepared a banquet, and the invitation remains open. Just as God continues to invite us into a life of grace, love, and communion with Him every day.

May we never become so busy, distracted, or preoccupied that we fail to recognize the beauty and importance of this invitation. And may we live each day remembering, everything in life is gift. And a grateful heart is one that recognizes the Giver.

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