

Gratitude Prayer Service

Introduction: Generous God, you are good to us. You have given us so many gifts—our world, our life and health, our family and friends. We sometimes forget to say thank you. Today and for the months of September and October we will be working on developing a grateful heart for all the blessings you bestow on us. Gratitude is the virtue that makes us aware and appreciate the gives we receive each day. Our quote for these months “This is the day the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad” Psalm 118:24 will be the foundation for our work.

Opening Prayer: We come together to celebrate our faith and gratitude for all that you have given us. Our hearts are filled with thanksgiving. Help us to appreciate our gifts and to use them wisely. We ask this in the name of your Son who lived to show us your way. AMEN

Old Testament Reading—Sirach 50:22-24

Responsorial Psalm: 145

Response: I will exalt you, my God the King. I will praise your name for ever and ever

Second Reading—Romans 15:5-7

Gospel Reading—Luke 17:11-19

Optional Activities:

Cut out large letters: Thank You God to decorate the place of worship

Have the altar or prayer table decorated with items that reflect our gratitude (pitcher of water, pictures of students, fall leaves, a globe, etc.)

Create a slide show of pictures that showcase our gratefulness (pictures of nature, students, etc.)

Universal Prayers:

Response: We thank you God

- For the Church: that your spirit of hospitality, flow out of all our doors, to welcome God’s people, we pray
- For our communities: our First Nations peoples, our Province, our Country, all people of the world, that Your spirit of understanding removes unjust barriers of fear and discrimination, we pray
- For our Catholic Schools (especially, your school name), that your spirit of wisdom flow through the classrooms, halls, and grounds of these sacred places of learning, we pray
- Father, you overwhelm us with your goodness. We thank you for all your gifts. Please help us to live thankfully every day, we pray

Closing Prayer: Loving God, let our thankful hearts continue to be open to your love. Guide our feet to walk in your ways. Help our hands to create a welcoming and loving world.

May your love inspire us and your light sustain us. We ask this in the name of your son who is here amongst us as we gather in his name. Amen.



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Northeastern Catholic District School Board

Growing our Faith through virtues

SEPTEMBER & OCTOBER
VIRTUE: GRATITUDE

The Importance of Gratitude:

The choice to be grateful is not always without effort. Gratitude is the virtue that makes us aware and appreciate the gifts we receive each day. One quote for this virtue “This is the day the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad” (Psalm 118:24) will be the foundation of our work. To express thankfulness is a simple way to share our faith as it fills our hearts with a readiness to cherish all that we have.



In this age of consumerism and the “me-centered” focus of today’s culture, we must refrain from feelings of self-entitlement. Materialism and consumerism prevent us from enjoying and being appreciative of all that we have. We cannot think that we have a right to demand without giving anything in return and without giving thanks for all we are.

Exemplifying gratitude means:

- Giving thanks to God for the many blessings we have
- Giving thanks to God for every day He gives us
- Focusing on the good in our lives and the good in others
- Not lamenting or complain about the things they do not have
- Recognizing the good in ourselves and giving our best to improve or to help others
- Appreciating others and the things they do for us
- Taking care of your things, keeping them in order and sharing them with whoever needs them
- Not wasting your gifts (water, food, electricity, your talents, etc.)
- Gratitude is the ability to appreciate what happens around us. The more we give thanks, the more we realize that God is always involved in our lives.
- Gratitude is being positive and appreciative of all of the events in our lives

DEVELOPING CHARACTER THROUGH GRATITUDE

The goal of this virtue:

- To help our students give thanks for what they have and for who they are instead of focusing on what they are not and do not have
- To help our students and ourselves learn to be attentive and to stop and enjoy the moments of happiness and joy in our lives. It is important to not lose our sense of wonder and thanksgiving for the simple things
- To teacher our children to be grateful for life itself and to live in accordance to the purpose which we were created for

“This is the day, the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad.”

Psalm 118:24

Building in Opportunities for Gratitude in Your Classroom:

- Have students create a visual essay where they are responsible to find a picture or image to represent what they are thankful for
- Gratitude basket—students write things they are thankful for. Take time each day to read them aloud as a class
- Gratitude wall—graffiti

PRAYER CENTRE IDEAS FOR GRATITUDE



- Cut out large letters “THANK YOU GOD” or “ALL THANKS 2 U” and post at the classroom prayer centre
- Have children reflect on something they are thankful for, have them draw or write about it. Display.
- Have children bring a picture of someone they are thankful for. Make a gratitude photo album
- Have a “thank you” writing literacy centre where students can write a card of gratitude to God or someone who has enriched their lives. Don’t forget the Thank you cards!
- Have students create a wordle for the things they are thankful for (www.wordle.net)

BUILDING GRATITUDE IN OUR HOMES AND SCHOOLS

Before all else we must never forget that as parents and teachers we are the model that our children will imitate. We must be the first ones to live everything we want to teach them. We can foster an Attitude of Gratitude by:

Modeling: Adults need to model gratefulness to children. Show appreciation for the blessings in our lives

Encourage Service: Give children opportunities to give to

Create rituals for giving thanks: Include thankfulness in your evening prayers. Discuss daily blessings at the dinner table

Spend time outdoors: Go for walks, pick up pretty leaves, admire the beauty in all the seasons

Discuss with your children the difference between wants and needs & Rights and Privileges

School-based activities:

- Weekly gratitude circles
- Go for a day without something (electricity, computers, lights, etc.) for students to demonstrate an appreciation for these things
- Class gratitude journals
- World Gratitude Day—September 21st.
- School “book for awesome”
- 30 days of gratitude
- Make thankful videos
- Harvest feast
- Gratitude tree in lobby

Sample prayers for students to use:

Lord I thank you for the little things on earth, for the great and mighty things. For the things that fascinate and amaze me, for the things I have and use. I give thanks Lord for all creation, but most of all for you, the creator. AMEN

I stand in thankfulness before you, Lord for all that you have given me, shown me, promised me, and for your protection and guidance. AMEN

Lord, I thank you for the food you give me to eat. Bless those who grow it and prepare it. Thank you for the earth that provided it. As it gives me strength, I ask you to grant sustenance to those who lack it. AMEN

God our Father, in your greatest act of love you sent your Son, Jesus Christ to be one with us in this world. By his teaching and his sacrifice we are enabled to be one with you in eternity.. May our thanks be a reflection of the immensity of your love. AMEN

Thank you, Lord for the fleas and snacks and things that bite. They help us appreciate the ones that don't. AMEN

Quotes about Gratitude

“If the only prayer you ever say in your entire life is thank you, it will be enough”. M. Eckhart



“Everything we have to be thankful for comes from God”. Author Unknown

“If we expect others to be grateful for what we do, we should show appreciation to others” Author Unknown

“It is not how much we have but how much we enjoy that makes happiness” Charles H Spurgeon

“Lord, your love knows no bounds. Fill my heart with gratitude for the gifts you lavish upon me every day” Psalm 23:1-6

“Worship the Lord with gladness” Psalm 100:2

Resources to support the Virtue of Gratitude

Thank you God for Everything Author: August Gold

Saying Grace: A Prayer of Thanksgiving. Author: Virginia Kroll

The Book of Awesome. Author: Neil Pasricha

The Secret of Saying Thanks. Author: Douglas Wood

These Hands. Author: Hope Lynne Price

The Great Kapok Tree. Author: Lynne Cherry

Feeling Thankful. Author: Shelley Rotner



God Gave us You. Author: Lisa Tawn Bergren

I Love My Hair. Author: NatashaAnastasia Tarpley

Grandad’s Prayers of the Earth. Author: Douglas Woods

Gratitude Soup. Author: Olivia Rosewood.

Grateful—A song of Giving Thanks. Author: John Bucchino

I wish you more. Author: Amy Krouse Rosenthal

It could always be worse. Author: Margot Zemach

Feeling Thankful. Author: Shelley Rotner

An Awesome Book of Thanks. Author: Dallas Clayton

Awesome is Everywhere. Author: Neil Pasricha



5 Links to Catholic Graduate Expectations

A Discerning Believer formed in the Catholic Faith Community

Develops attitudes and values founded on Catholic Social Teachings and acts to promote social responsibility, human solidarity and common good

Understands that one’s purpose or call in life comes from God and strives to discern and live out this call throughout life’s journey

A self-directed, responsible lifelong learner

Demonstrates a confident and positive sense of self and respect for the dignity and welfare of others

A Collaborative Contributor

Develops one’s God-given potential and makes meaningful contributions to society

Finds meaning, dignity, fulfillment and vocation in work which contributes to the common good

A Reflective and creative lifelong learner

Creates, adapts, evaluated new ideas in light of the common good

A Responsible Citizen

Contributes to the common good

Respects the environment and uses resources wisely

Links to learning skills:

RESPONSIBILITY:

- Fulfills responsibilities and commitments within the learning environment
- Completes and submits class work, homework and assignments according to the agreed upon timelines
- Takes responsibility and manages own behaviour
- Responsibility for own behaviour, words and actions
- Commitment
- Global Community
- Stewardship of the environment

COLLABORATION

- Accepts various roles and equitable share of work in a group
- Responds positively to the ideas/opinions
- Shares information, to promote critical thinking
- Inclusion

“God gave you a gift of 86 400 seconds today. Have you used one to say ‘thank you’?”
William A Ward