

# SUNDAY HOMILY

Homily 28<sup>th</sup> Sunday Year C (10/09/2016)

## Importance of Gratitude

Two major examples are given to us from the first reading and the Gospel of people who showed gratitude for the healing they received. Naaman, a Moabite, showed gratitude to prophet Elisha for healing his leprosy. In contrast, this was the time Israelite kings and queens and their children showed ingratitude to God by worshiping Baal and other gods. In the Gospel, one of the ten lepers, a Samaritan, healed by Jesus returned to show gratitude. In contrast, the other nine, who were Jews, took their healing for granted and never came to Jesus to show gratitude.

Someone said that ingratitude is the worst of all vices. The truth of this statement lies in the fact that every other vice is an expression of ingratitude to God. For example, if I refuse to forgive someone, I am expressing ingratitude to God who forgives me at all time. Also, ingratitude is a two edged sword. It is destructive to the one who expresses it and to the one who receives it.

The message today is, let us fill our heart with gratitude to God and towards our fellow human beings. This will enable us to reduce or possibly eliminate complaining, fault finding, nagging and whining.

Today's Gospel acclamation, 1Thess 5:18, "In **all circumstances** give thanks, for this is the will of God for you in Christ." Eph 5:20, "Give thanks **always and for everything** in the name of our Lord Jesus to God the Father."

If gratitude is not important Jesus would not have emphasized it, and in fact demanded it. Jesus says in the Gospel, "Where are the other nine? Has none but this foreigner returned to give thanks to God?" It is worth noting that Jesus does not say, "Has none but this foreigner returned to *give thanks to me.*" This means that each time we express gratitude to our fellow human being, we are giving thanks to God. Psalm 50:23, "Those who offer praise as a sacrifice honor me." Therefore, each time we show ingratitude to anyone, we dishonor God since every blessing comes from God. Gratitude, as we read in 1Cor 4:7, is a recognition that all we have are a gift from God. 1Cor 1:31 says, "Let anyone who boasts boast in the Lord."

## The Power of Gratitude

1. Gratitude weakens the power of the Evil One. It keeps the Evil One out of the scene, and far from us.
2. Gratitude to God, even in our worst condition, makes us see the hand of God at work. St Ignatius teaches us to see God in all things. By seeing God in all things, we do not give the Evil One any reason to establish his presence and power over us.
3. Gratitude to God is in itself a prayer. As we express gratitude we are in a way praying that God gives us more opportunities to thank him.
4. Gratitude is life giving as it helps us to see every event from the positive lens. Therefore, it is reinforcing and empowering. It encourages people to bring out their best. Ingratitude is discouraging and diminishing. Ingratitude makes people put up appearance and not commitment.
5. Gratitude is attractive and inviting. Ingratitude increases distaste and withdrawal.
6. Gratitude promotes healthy and happy environment as it enables love and joy. Ingratitude creates sadness and unhappy environment.
7. Gratitude is medicinal. It brings about physical and spiritual healing. It decreases and cures anger, stress, anxiety, depression, pains and aches, and confusion. Ingratitude is sickening.
8. Be sure to receive more with gratitude and less or nothing with ingratitude. Mk 4:25, "To the one who has, more will be given. From the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away."

Therefore, let us count your blessings than your woes. Let us encourage one another today (Heb 3:13).

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