



Pausing to Be Grateful

"LET ME SING OF THE LORD, 'HOW GOOD OUR GOD HAS BEEN TO ME!'" (Ps 13:6)

LEADER

As we gather today, let us pay particular attention to God's many blessings upon us, especially those we so easily take for granted in the course of our busy lives. The rapid, hectic pace of our lives, the multitude of activities we are engaged in, the frenetic movement from one thing to the next, the preoccupations of the moment and our planning for the future, the demands placed upon us and the demands we place on ourselves: all this blurs our vision of what surrounds us and exists within us. We pause in silence from all our distractions to be mindful of the abundant blessings that envelope us.

(Pause for a moment of reflection.)

READER

"It is amazing isn't it, how we can miss so much of life? The key to gratitude is surprise. When we lose our sensitivity to wonder and awe, when we simply trudge or zoom through the days, we can so easily miss the daily gifts of life. When we awaken to what is within us and around us, when we savor, relish, and taste life fresh each day, our heart holds much more gratitude for our blessings.

Andrew Harvest writes in the book *The Way of Passion* that if we were really looking at the world, we would be moved a hundred times a day by the flowers at the side of the road, the people we meet, by all that brings us messages of our own goodness wherever we find it. The problem with being grateful is not the lack of countless blessings, the problem is with being inattentive and unaware of those blessings."

—Joyce Rupp, *The Cup of Our Life: A Guide for Spiritual Growth*, Ave Maria Press, Notre Dame, IN, 1997, p. 146.

(Pause for a moment of reflection.)

LEADER

For all that you have given us,

ALL

We thank you, gracious God.

LEADER

For eyes to see, ears to hear, noses to smell, hands to touch, and hearts to appreciate the abundant blessings that surround us,

ALL

We beseech you, gracious God.

LEADER

For wonder and awe at each new day and for attentiveness and awareness to all that we encounter and experience during the course of each day,

ALL

We beseech you, gracious God.

LEADER

For grateful hearts every day,

ALL

We beseech you, gracious God.

LEADER

Gracious God, for your bountiful gifts to us, we are most grateful but also, unfortunately, often forgetful. Lead us to be ever attentive to and appreciative of the blessings of each day—to the sights, the sounds, the smells, to those dear to us and the people we will meet today, to the experiences of each moment, and to the blessing of life itself. Let us not squander your abundance through neglect, but see and live each day anew with grateful hearts.

Amen.



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