The Importance of Gratitude

The choice to be grateful is not always without effort. October’s virtue is Gratitude, how apropos that we will be celebrating Thanksgiving in just a few short days. Gratitude is the virtue that makes us aware and appreciate the gifts we receive each day. Our quote for the month “This is the day the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad” (Psalm 118:24) will be the foundation for 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 that we are.

Exemplifying gratitude means:

- Giving thanks to God for the many daily blessings we have
- Focusing on the good in our lives and the good in others
- Not lamenting on what we do not have
- Develop learning goals and success criteria for the virtue of Gratitude using the goals and exemplifying gratitude article.

Developing Character through Gratitude

The goal of this virtue is:

- 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 teach our children to be grateful for life itself and to live in accordance to the purpose which we were created for.
- Recognizing the good in ourselves and giving our best to improve or to help others
- Appreciating others and the work 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).
- Celebrating Gratitude In Our Classrooms

This is the day, the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad.’
~Psalm 118:24
A Prayer of Gratitude

Gracious God in this busyness of my day, I sometimes forget to stop and thank you for all that is good in my life.

My blessings are many and my heart is filled with gratefulness for the gift of living, for the ability to love and be loved for the opportunity to see the everyday wonders of creation, for sleep and water, for a mind that thinks and a body that feels.

I thank you too for those things in my life that are less than I would hope them to be. Things that seem challenging, unfair or difficult.

In the silence of my soul, I thank you most of all for your unconditional and eternal love.

Amen

Prayer Center Ideas for Gratitude

- Cut out large letters “THANK YOU GOD” or “ALL THANKS 2 U” and post at the classroom prayer center
- Have children reflect on something they are thankful for, have them draw or write about it. Display these items at the prayer center.
- Have children bring a picture of someone they are thankful for. Make a gratitude photo album.

Fostering an Attitude of 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 others and make someone else happy
- **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 and Rights and Privileges**
Gratitude Prayer for Every Day of the Week

Monday

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.

Tuesday

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

Wednesday

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

Prayer Reflections on Gratitude

Holy God,
Creator God,
Wonder God,
pour into our hearts a humble gratitude.
Help us to see as You see...
the beauty of this universe,
the awesome wonder of our planet,
the splendor of everything that moves and grows.
Heal the inner blindness that causes us to use Your creation selfishly.
Drive from within us the carelessness that discards frivolously and that protests vigorously when we don’t get what we want.
Let us be touched by true thankfulness.
Let the well of deep gratitude come to life within us.
We make our prayer in the name of Jesus. Amen

Possible Lesson Ideas with this prayer:
• Have students create a visual essay where they are responsible to find a picture or image to represent each line in the prayer, add the text on the slide, find appropriate music to accompany
• Visual Essays can be completed using Power Point, iMovie, Keynote...
Resources to Support the Virtue of Gratitude

**Thank You God for Everything** by August Gold
ISBN 0 399 240 497

**Saying Grace A Prayer of Thanksgiving** by Virginia Kroll
ISBN 0 310 712 106

**The Book of Awesome** by Neil Pasricha
ISBN 0425238903

**The Secret of Saying Thanks** by Douglas Wood
ISBN 978 068 9854 101

**These Hands** by Hope Lynne Price
ISBN 978 1423 10633 3

**It Could Always Be Worse** by Margot Zemach
ISBN 0 374 436 363

**The Great Kapok Tree** by Lynne Cherry
ISBN 978 015 2026 141

**Feeling Thankful** by Shelley Rotner
ISBN 978 019 184

**I Love my Hair** by Natasha Anastasia Tarpley
ISBN 0 316 52375 5

**Grandad’s Prayers of the Earth** by Douglas Wood
ISBN 978 076 360 6602

“Worship the Lord with gladness;...Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise. Give thanks to him, bless his name.”

*Psalm 100.2,4*
Introduction:
Generous God, you are good to us. You have given us many gifts—our world, our life and health, our family and friends. We sometimes forget to say thank you. Today and for the month of 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 gifts we receive each day. Our quote for the month “This is the day the Lord has make, let us rejoice and be glad” Psalm 118:24 will be the foundation for our work.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and the Holy Spirit
Amen

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

Fist Reading: Sirach 50: 22-24

A Reading from the book of Sirach
And now bless the God of all, who everywhere works great wonders, who fosters our growth from birth and deals with us according to the his mercy. May he give us gladness of heart, and may there be peace in our days in Israel, as in days of old. May he entrust us to his mercy and he deliver us in our days.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God

Reflection: Take a moment to reflect on how you can become a person who demonstrates gratitude:

A Grateful Person is someone who...

- Gives thanks to God for every day He gives us.
- Focuses on the good in our lives and the good in others
- Doesn’t lament or complain about the things they do not have
- Shows appreciation to others for the things they do for us
- Does not waste the gifts that God has given to us e.g. does not waste water, food, and their talents
Prayer Service for a Grateful Heart Continue

Prayers of the Faithful

The response is “We Thank You God’

God our father, we thank you for your Son Jesus. We thank you for our friends. We ask you to bless them and all those who are good to us. R

For our parents—mothers and fathers—who love us and care for us. R

For our family and friends who forgive us when we hurt them. R

For our principals who lead our schools with faith and compassion. R

For our priests and teachers who teach us about your son Jesus. R

For our educational assistants who help and advocate for us. R

For our secretaries, custodians, lunch attendants and all the people who make things better for us. R

Father, you overwhelm us with your goodness. We thank you for all your gifts. Please help us to live thank-fully every day.

Let us remember all the people and things in our life which make our lives so rich and beautiful...and let us pray the prayer Jesus taught us, Our Father...

Closing Prayer:

God, our Father, give us the ability to live with thankful hearts. Fill us with a sense of wonder at your good-ness, the beauties of creation and the uniqueness of each day. May our hearts become rooted in you. May we live fully and joyfully.

Amen

Gratitude Prayer for Every Day of the Week Continued

Thursday

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.

Friday

Thank you, Lord for fleas and snakes and things that bite. They help us appreciate the ones that don’t.

Amen
Ressources Françaises

Ça aurait pu être pire par A.H. Benjamin et Tim Warnes

Écoute les Voix de la Terre by Douglas Wood
ISBN 9782700042771

Mon livre pour dire merci par B. G. Hennessy
ISBN 978-2747011266

Toi, vole! Par Eve Bunting
ISBN 978-2748503142

Merci
C’est un petit mot tout simple
Mais qui pèse lourd
Si mes lèves l’expriment avec douceur
C’est qu’il prend naissance au fond de mon coeur.
Un grand merci, un petit merci
Peu importe sa taille
Il n’a pas de dimension...
Que se soit dans la joie ou dans la tristesse
C’est un signe de reconnaissance
Qui ne connaît pas l’indifférence
Merci
Un petit mot qui fait du bien quand on le prononce
Un petit mot gracieux qui calme et réjouit
Merci Merci
Merci de m’avoir permis de te dire,
De vous dire:
Merci
## Exploring Learning Skills and Work Habits with Gratitude Virtue

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Skill (Growing Success 2010)</th>
<th>Sample Behaviours (Growing Success 2010)</th>
<th>Links to Catholic Graduate Expectations</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>Fulfills responsibilities and commitments within the learning environment</td>
<td><strong>A Discerning Believer formed in the Catholic Faith Community</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Completes and submits class work, homework, and assignments according to the agreed upon timelines</td>
<td>• Develops attitudes and values founded on Catholic Social Teachings and acts to promote social responsibility, human solidarity and common good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Takes responsibility and manages own behaviour</td>
<td>• 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</td>
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**Big Ideas from a Catholic Perspective:**
- Responsibility for own behaviour, words and actions
- Commitment
- Global Community
- Stewardship of the environment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collaboration</th>
<th>Accepts various roles and an equitable share of work in a group</th>
<th><strong>A Self-directed, responsible lifelong learner</strong></th>
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<tbody>
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<td></td>
<td>Responds positively to the ideas opinions, values and traditions of others</td>
<td>• Demonstrates a confident and positive sense of self and respect for the dignity and welfare of others</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shares information, resources and expertise and promotes critical thinking to solve problems and make decisions</td>
<td><strong>A Collaborative Contributor</strong></td>
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**Big Ideas from a Catholic Perspective:**
- Sharing
- Inclusion

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collaboration</th>
<th>Creates, adapts, evaluated new ideas in light of the common good.</th>
<th><strong>A Reflective and creative lifelong learner</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Respects the environment and uses resources wisely</td>
<td><strong>A Responsible Citizen</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Contributes to the common good</td>
<td><strong>A Collaborative Contributor</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Collaboration                        | Finds meaning, dignity, fulfillment and vocation in work which contributes to the common good | **A Reflective and creative lifelong learner** |
|--------------------------------------| Respects the rights and responsibilities of self and others | **A Responsible Citizen** |

| Collaboration                        | Finds meaning, dignity, fulfillment and vocation in work which contributes to the common good | **A Collaborative Contributor** |
|--------------------------------------| Respects the rights and responsibilities of self and others | **A Reflective and creative lifelong learner** |

| Collaboration                        | Creates, adapts, evaluated new ideas in light of the common good. | **A Reflective and creative lifelong learner** |
|--------------------------------------| Respects the rights and responsibilities of self and others | **A Responsible Citizen** |