

Impact

Bring faith to life. Find life in faith.

Choose abundance.

This isn't a simple glass-half-empty or glass-half-full sort of thing. Many of us have been taught to think about life through a lens of **scarcity**: What is missing? What needs fixing? An attitude of gratitude leads us to look at life instead through a perspective of **abundance**. We see that each day and all that surrounds us is a gift from God, and grow in our desire to share with others out of gratitude for our many blessings.



Make choosing abundance over scarcity a habit.

It is easy to get caught up in our daily routines and activities and lose sight of God's grace and abundance in our midst. People who study the formation of habits tell us that it helps to **prompt** ourselves to remember what we are trying to make part of life. Following the

prompt, **practice** the behavior, and then **pay attention** to the difference the habit makes in order for it to stick.

Prompt: Set a timer on your phone or smart device periodically throughout the day to call yourself to a moment of gratitude.

Practice: Begin the day with a prayer of gratitude. Express thanksgiving at meals. End the day by noticing the many times you were blessed.

Pay attention: Ask God to guide your heart and life, so that you will develop a grateful heart. Out of gratitude, share your time and resources more readily with others.

At first, this may seem awkward or forced. Stick with it! You'll soon recognize God's abundant grace beyond what you are able to comprehend. Such a grateful life does take practice. It is sure to have lasting impact, so that your life will be full and overflowing with abundance!

A thanksgiving reflection and prayer

"To be grateful is to recognize the Love of God in everything he has given us – and He has given us everything. Every breath we draw is a gift of His love, every moment of existence is a grace, for it brings with it immense graces from Him. Gratitude therefore takes nothing for granted, is never unresponsive, is constantly awakening to new wonder and to praise of the goodness of God. For the grateful person knows that God is good, not by hearsay but by experience. And that is what makes all the difference." - Thomas Merton

Good and gracious God, you are the source of every good gift, of all we are and have and will be. We give you thanks this day for the abundant blessings of life, faith, family, and friends, for the beauty of creation and all that reminds us of your goodness. Open our hearts to perceive your grace in our midst, our minds to learn and know your truth, and our hands to share your loving presence in the world. Guide us as we commit ourselves to living as good and faithful stewards of the many gifts you have given us. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, through the working of the Holy Spirit. One God, for ever and ever. Amen.



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See the invisible with your very own eyes

“He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For in him were created all things in heaven and on earth, the visible and the invisible.” - Col 1:15

When was the last time you saw God in your midst? This might seem a foolish question. God is invisible, right? In faith, we believe God is always with us, and find reassurance and consolation in the promise of God's presence. Yet, as wonderful as this assurance is, there is more we must consider.

Each of us is created in God's image. We have been blessed with life, faith, relationships, gifts and talents, the beauty of creation, and so much more.

When we become attentive to the blessings in our lives, we perceive God's grace in our midst. We see the evidence of God within and around us. This awareness changes us. We become thankful people. As we grow in gratitude for these abundant blessings, we recognize our call to steward these many blessings well — to make them fruitful by nurturing, tending, and sharing them. When we do this, we live as God desires and give glory to God, the giver of the abundant blessings. **Still there is more.**

Jesus is the image of the invisible God. Jesus perfectly shows us who God is and how God desires us to live.



As Christian disciples, we are called to become more Christ-like with each day of our lives. When we reflect on all we know about Jesus and his way of life, we understand that Jesus' way is about giving, of putting others, especially those most in need, first. Jesus' way is the way of self-giving, sacrificial love.

“Jesus is the supreme teacher of Christian stewardship as he is of every other aspect of Christian life; and in Jesus' teaching and life self-emptying is fundamental. Now, it might seem that self-emptying has little to do with stewardship, but in Jesus' case that is not so. His self-emptying is not sterile self-denial for its own sake; rather in setting aside self, he is filled with the Father's will, and he is fulfilled in just this way: “My food is to do the will of the one who sent me and to finish his work.” (Jn 4:34).” (SDR, p. 19) **Still there is more.**

We have been baptized into Christ's very life. Jesus tells us that when we reach out to the least ones among us, we are reaching out to him. St. Mother Teresa spoke often of seeing in the poorest of the poor whom she selflessly served the face of Christ in “distressing disguise.”

When do you see God in your midst? Look around you. God is there — in the abundant blessings of life, the faces of family and friends and the least ones. **Still there is more.**

As a member of Christ's body, you are called to make the invisible visible through your caring and sharing, your stewardship of life, gifts, and resources. As you do so, you will see the invisible with your very own eyes!



This year, the Sunday before Thanksgiving is the final Sunday of the liturgical year, the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe. We are baptized into Christ's life as priest, prophet, and king. Today, we are reminded that following Jesus' kingship is not about earthly power, but rather of humble obedience to God's will. “The Lord wishes to spread His

kingdom also by means of the laity, namely, a kingdom of truth and life, a kingdom of holiness and grace, a kingdom of justice, love and peace....Clearly then a great promise and a great trust is committed to the disciples: ‘All things are yours, and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's.’ (1 Cor 3:23) (LG, 36)

This mission of spreading Christ's kingdom is sacred, although not always easy. Faith in Jesus Christ calls us to persevere, to “stick with it” even when it is difficult to do so. Our faith is sure to be tested, by the circumstances of daily life, by aspects of our social and cultural surroundings, by the knowledge that many in our world suffer the effects of violence, poverty, war, and injustice.

Throughout his earthly ministry, in his death on the cross, and in his resurrection, Jesus helps us to grasp the implications of discipleship, and he encourages us to keep the wider view, certain that the challenges of the moment will not have the final word. Jesus, the Word made flesh, the king of the universe, is that final word, that of truth, life, holiness, grace, justice, love, and peace.