

## **Thanksgiving – USA Optional Memorial**

Jesus said in reply, “Ten were cleansed, were they not? Where are the other nine? Has none but this foreigner returned to give thanks to God?” Luke 17:17-18

Happy Thanksgiving! Though Thanksgiving Day is not specifically a Catholic holy day, it certainly goes hand in hand with our life of faith. Spiritually speaking, we all know that gratitude is central to the Gospel message.

Thanksgiving Day presents us with the perfect opportunity to look at this particular aspect of our faith. We are called to be eternally and deeply grateful. How grateful to God are you?

Perhaps we all struggle in various ways with gratitude. It's fair to say that we will never be grateful enough until we are perfected in Heaven. But, for now, it's important to look at gratitude and to try to let it increase in our souls.

First, we will never be grateful unless we see clearly all that God has done for us. It's so easy in life to focus in on all the struggles we face and, as a result, to get down, depressed, frustrated and even angry at times. What's far more challenging is to look beyond the crosses and burdens we face each day to see the abundance of grace and mercy given to us by our Lord. Unless we see that mercy and grace, we will struggle greatly with authentic gratitude.

So on this Thanksgiving Day, reflect upon this simple question:

Do I see all God has done for me? Do I see His abundance of mercy alive in my life? The Gospel passage above reveals that Jesus healed ten lepers, but only one of the ten returned in gratitude. Are you like one of the nine who failed in gratitude? If so, you most likely struggle with seeing all the true and abundant blessings from God.

If you can humbly admit you struggle with total gratitude, you will have taken the first step to seeing more clearly and the first step to fostering the deeper gratitude you ought to have. Being grateful means you see the truth clearly. Be open to that truth and God will change your life as He fills you with joy!

Lord, please do fill my heart with an abundance of gratitude. Help me to turn my eyes to Your infinite grace and mercy. Help me to see beyond the struggles of life and the burdens that get me down. In place of these, help me to become increasingly aware of all You have done for me and our Country and all that You continue to do. **Jesus, I trust in You.**