

October 2022

Community Newsletter

Thrive For Life

30 W. 16th St. | New York, NY 10011
(212) 337-7544 | info@thriveforlife.org



GOSPEL

Luke 17:11-19

OTHER READINGS

2 Kings 5:14-17, Psalm 98, 2 Timothy 2:8-13

MONTHLY EXAMEN

We invite you to prayerfully reflect:

Presence

Become aware that God's presence is active at each moment of your life, looking at you with love, desirous of speaking directly to your heart. How do you feel at this moment?

Ask

Ask God for the grace to see the ways God is working in your life.

Gratitude

Be grateful. Thank God for the gifts, both big and small of the day.
What are you most grateful for today?

Review

Trust that God is with you at each moment of day, during the good and challenging moments. God never abandons you.
What were the good moments of today?
What were the greatest challenges of today?

Respond

You are not stuck. Tomorrow is a new day. Ask God to give you the grace to be the loving and generous person you were created to be.
What can you do tomorrow to be more generous and loving?

Conclude with the Sign of the Cross.



ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE

Being grateful is hard. It's hard because of our human tendency to take things for granted. It may be easier to say "thank you" just to be polite than it is to actually be grateful. To be grateful means more than just giving thanks for the things you have received. To be grateful is to have an attitude, a disposition of always being appreciative for what we have and what we don't have. To live with an attitude of gratitude, especially with God, is a sign of humility. Why? Because we realize that all that we receive is not from our own power or abilities, but out of the graciousness of others.

This Samaritan who came back to thank Jesus after he was healed lived with this attitude. Take into consideration the fact that Samaritans and the Jewish people at the time had animosity toward each other. It must have taken a lot of faith to thank Jesus, despite the cultural rifts between their peoples. For this reason, Jesus tells him that his faith has saved him. What is preventing you today from living with an attitude of gratitude? Ask God to help you identify those blocks and to remove them in order to be truly grateful for all of His many gifts and blessings.

*C. Germosen,
Seminarian of the Archdiocese of New York*

GOD ALWAYS MEETS US WHERE WE ARE

Traveling back to NYC, I board in Scranton, stepping onto a pretty full bus. The seats are almost all full as I look around, eventually sitting across the aisle from a couple of men dressed in identical outfits --- heavy-duty khakis and white button-down shirts — with no luggage. I don't pay them much attention at first - I've got my nose buried in a book. As the bus gets caught in the infamous Lincoln Tunnel traffic, I can't help but overhear their conversation: "Bro, I can't wait to get back to the city, I've been upstate ever since I caught my charge." After spending time accompanying those in jails, I know that he isn't talking about getting stuck in Syracuse without a charger for his cellphone - he's just been released from prison!

Catching the eye of the man sitting directly across the aisle from me, I ask, "How long has it been since you crossed the Yellow Brick Road?" Judging by the stunned expression on his face, I am not exactly the type of person that he expects to hear that question from. "The Yellow Brick Road" is the term used by people who spend significant chunks of time on Rikers Island to describe the bridge to the island. After he gets over his shock, we start to chat. I mention that I help the Catholic chaplain at a couple of the facilities on Rikers Island. Immediately, they both start making the sign of the Cross. We introduce ourselves and they seem shook by the fact that I'm more than willing to call them by their nicknames. If there's one thing that I've learned behind the walls, it's that one of the most humanizing things that we can do is refer to another human being as they would like us to. At this point, Steve and Marcus (not their real names) mention that they've been behind the walls since before COVID, so the NYC that they're coming home to is totally different from the one that they remember.

As our bus pulls into the terminal, God invites me to continue to walk with these men. As we keep chatting, I ask about their plans. It soon emerges that they need to use a phone as well as hop on the subway, so off we go! After phone calls are made, they eagerly take me up on my offer of some food. For the recently released, few things are appreciated as much as one's first taste of a favorite food - and few things build community as much as breaking bread together. Since we're near the Port Authority Bus Terminal there are a million food carts nearby and Marcus mentions that it has been years since he's eaten an authentic New York hotdog, so we stroll over to the carts. They both order classic New York hotdogs. They both seem to be enjoying these simple hotdogs far more than I enjoy many of my meals. I stop and think about some of the elements of life that I so often take for granted, such as choosing when and what I eat.

As we shake hands and go our separate ways, I realize that God has broken into my busy day through these two men. I had been given a chance to authentically meet these fellow humans precisely because of the path that God had invited me to walk. As this realization washes over me, I feel a deep sense of gratitude towards these two men. Just like them, I appreciate the meal and the fellowship, and I am awed by their openness and willingness to talk with me, based on nothing more than my familiarity with the language of the incarcerated and saying that I was a chaplain. I am amazed at the God who uses each of our unique life experiences to give us equally unique opportunities to help make this world a more loving, just, and peaceful place.

*L. Lapean, Jesuit Scholastic at Ciszek Hall,
Fordham University*

BECOME A RESIDENT SCHOLAR AT IGNACIO HOUSE OF STUDIES!

If you are passionate about your education and wish to continue your academic journey post-release, Ignacio House offers transitional supportive housing along with a holistic suite of services for formerly incarcerated students. Find a sense of purpose and overcome barriers to employment, housing, and education.

Interested in joining? Send the following to our contact information at the top of this page:

- Full name & DIN number •
- Current college you are enrolled in and/or where you will study post-release •
- Contact information for college/university where you will study •