



Family Life Office

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IDEAS FOR LIVING BETTER FROM THE FAMILY LIFE OFFICE

Family Ritual

Thanksgiving is a beautiful opportunity to be grateful for the blessings we have in our lives. This month, see if you can:

Spend more time with family at meals and in recreation to foster family unity.

Take your children to vote with you to instill in them the privilege and responsibility of citizenship.

Count your blessings together as a family every night to recognize how much God has already done for you.

*Andre McCarville
 Director of Family Life and Missions
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A Prayer of Thanksgiving

O God of all Creation: You have cared for the earth, and have filled it with your riches. Abundance flows in your steppes, through the pastures and wilderness. You provide for our land, softening it with showers, bathing it in light, and blessing it with growth.

The hills sing with joy; the meadows are covered with flocks; the fields deck themselves with wheat; and together they glorify your name!

On this occasion of our Thanksgiving, we as a nation take rest from our labors to consider your many blessings. We thank you for our freedoms, and for the opportunity to contribute our skills, our attributes and our values toward the good of society.



We thank you for the mixture of our cultures, blending us into one people under God. Help us to be a light unto other nations, and to further the cause of freedom and justice all over the world.

We remember those who are less fortunate than we. We lift up in prayer the victims of poverty and racism, and all those who suffer from forms of political and economic oppression. Let the word that goes forth from our mouths speak of your peace, and let us proclaim our hope in Christ as Savior of all humankind.

We pray that you will bless all those who gather here, as we have come to experience your presence among us. Give us your guidance, O God, and empower us for your work. For we claim nothing for ourselves, but return all honor and glory unto you, and offer our thanks and praise. Amen.

—*Prayers for God's People*, Thomas P. Roberts, Ed.

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 Fr. Brian Cavanaugh, T.O.R.

STOP and Ask Yourself

1. Do I stay informed about important local and national issues?
2. Do I know national, state and local representative and their voting records?
3. Do I ever call or write officials with well-considered opinions?
4. Do I respect others' right to disagree on political and other matters?
5. Do I offer public servants encouragement in addition to fair criticisms?
6. Do I work for candidates I support, even if none of them is "perfect"?
7. Do I attend meetings, sign—or start petitions, when issues really matter?
8. Do I encourage those with ideals and competence to seek careers in government?
9. Do I also try to influence others to do their best as citizens?
10. Do I pray for those in public office as well as for my community, country, world?



Families and the Gospel

November 3

Luke 19:1-10

Jesus is saying to you what he said to Zacchaeus, “I must stay at your house today.” It doesn’t matter if in today’s gospel Jesus “intended to pass through Jericho to another town.” In families we sometimes stop at the wrong places. It is wisdom to “pass through” annoying family situations so we can enjoy the goodness of each other.

November 10

Luke 20:27-38

The question of the Sadducees to Jesus is framed in a story about a family with seven brothers and their sister-in-law. Through story telling families remember their shared past and expose the companionship of God in your family from generation to generation.

November 17

Luke 21:5-19

As the man in today’s gospel entrusted his servants with his money, so God has ‘entrusted’ our family to us. Like the good servants we are expected, not to play it safe, but to selflessly and totally invest ourselves in each other.

November 24

Luke 23:35-43

Christ the King

Today’s gospel reminds us the Kingdom of Heaven is not like Disney’s Magic Kingdom. Admission to Christ’s Kingdom is paid with the currency of acceptance, forgiveness, attention to the poor and love of one’s enemy.

A Family Perspective
By Bud Ozar



[Wikimedia.org/Melkite-Christ-the-King](https://www.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Melkite-Christ-the-King)

Catholic 101

Eucharist means “*thanksgiving*”: The Sacrament that celebrates the Lord’s Supper is called Eucharist because it is an action of thanksgiving to God. The Greek word eucharistein means “to be thankful.” It recalls the Jewish blessings that proclaim —especially during a meal— gratitude for God’s works. According to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, the Eucharist is “the source and summit of the Christian life.” The Eucharist not only commemorates the Passion, death, and Resurrection of Christ, it makes it truly present. At the center of the Eucharistic celebration are the bread and wine that become Christ’s Body and Blood through the invocation of the Holy Spirit during the Eucharistic prayer. While many Christian denominations look at the bread and wine as reminders of the Last Supper, Catholic understanding is that the symbols of bread and wine become, in a way that is beyond what we can comprehend, the actual (though not physical) Body and Blood of Christ.

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Gratitude

Gratitude is a theme running through secular as well as spiritual life.

The desire to celebrate a fruitful harvest, for instance, is ancient and universal. People in many lands set aside a special day to express appreciation for the blessings received since the last Thanksgiving.

There are sumptuous meals, festive parades, religious observances and assisting in soup kitchens serving the poor.

In the life of the spirit, gratitude is a theme of utmost importance every day of the year. The theme is common in Scripture. In fact, the word for the central rite of Christian worship, Eucharist, means thanksgiving.

Whether in our day-to-day dealing with others or in our relationship with God, a spirit of gratitude **leads to a life of greater**

happiness.

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