

OCTOBER 12 2025 FATHER VIJAI AMIRTHARAJ

A village farmer stopped at a restaurant in a nearby town, and sat near a group of young men, who were acting up, and who were making fun of the waitress.

When his meal was set before him, the old farmer bowed his head, to offer a prayer of thanksgiving. And one of the smart alecks from the group thought he would have some fun with the old farmer. So he shouted in a loud voice that could be heard by everyone, "Hey, Pop, does everyone do this from where you come from?"

Calmly, the old man turned toward the lad, and with an innocent smile, he replied in an equally loud voice: "No, Son, our pigs don't."

Sisters and brothers, the readings for this Canadian Thanksgiving weekend remind us that we need to be grateful people. Grateful for the blessings that come from God, grateful for the blessings that come from others around us, and grateful for the blessings that we receive from God's beautiful creation.

It is said that there are two fundamental ways of being in the world. The first way of being assumes that my life, and all that fills my life, simply is more or less that I am entitled to. The nine lepers in today's Gospel, who disappeared from view without even saying a thank you to Jesus, honestly felt that good health was their right. It's not a gift. They simply received something which was owed to them.

And we see the second way of being, in the Samaritan leper, who returns, and drops to his knees before Jesus. His thankfulness is a fundamental attitude that says: Here I am, alive and whole. I did nothing to deserve life. It's a gift. It's grace.

Of course, very few of us will ever fall completely into one of these categories. Sometimes, we are overwhelmed with gratitude, at other times, we find ourselves consumed by a sense of entitlement. Sometimes, we recognize the grace for what it is, at other times, we don't.

Gratitude is a beatitude. An attitude that needs to be developed, and cultivated from early in life, because it changes the way we live our lives. It changes how we view people. It changes how we view the things around us. It changes how we relate with the circumstances of life. And also, it changes how we relate with God.

Saint Paul, in his letter to the Thessalonians, says, "Give thanks in all circumstances." But that is very easily said than done. It is something that we get good at with practice.

The word "Eucharist," means, as we know, "thanksgiving." Each time we come together to celebrate the Eucharist, we come to give thanks. To acknowledge the greatness of God. To acknowledge the place of God in our lives. But then we also come to ask the Lord to make us more and more grateful each and every day.

And that is something we come together to do today, on this Thanksgiving weekend.

And so, my dear brothers and sisters, let us renew once again that call, to live our lives with gratitude, and to share the blessings of God with those around us.

Amen.