

OCTOBER 13 2025 BISHOP ROBERT KASUN

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

"Ask and it will be given, search and you will find, knock and the door will be opened."

These are encouraging and comforting words, are they not? At least, they are comforting and encouraging until we begin to doubt them.

No doubt, all of us have had the experience, at some point, when we have indeed asked and it has not been given, or at least it seems not to have been given. Similarly, perhaps we have searched and have not found, or knocked and the door has not been opened.

What do we do in a situation such as this? Are these words to be taken seriously? The answer is yes, of course.

But in order to grasp what I suggest is the deeper meaning of these words of Jesus today, we need to look further down in the Gospel text, where Jesus speaks about giving.

"When a child asks for bread, no parent is going to give a stone. Or if a child asks for a fish, no parent will give a snake."

We will not give to our children, please God, that which is evil or harmful to them. So, when we recognize that we, who are human beings, will give good things to other people, it opens the door to a reflection on the absolute goodness, the absolute generosity, and great goodness of God, who desires to give us everything that is good and good for us.

This opens the door to our Thanksgiving—an appropriate theme for today's holiday, Thanksgiving weekend. Even in the secular world, thanksgiving appears to be a value, or at least somewhat a value, for people in spite of our self-centeredness.

But in Christian spirituality, gratitude is more than simply saying thank you to other people. It has a deeper meaning than that, and is indeed an important principle in our spiritual life, and in particular, in the spirituality of Christian stewardship.

You see, gratitude both opens the door to a deeper, loving relationship with the Lord, as well as understanding that gratitude brings about a deeper relationship with the Lord. So, it both points to and brings about. That is what we call efficaciousness, as in the Eucharist.

The Mass both points to a deeper relationship with the Lord, and it is well able to bring it about—in the word of God, in the body and blood of Christ himself, and in our understanding of God's presence in other people.

When we are grateful for the things that God gives us, it will lead us to a deeper relationship with the Lord, that which is of supreme importance in our spiritual life. As Pope Benedict XVI often said, "There is nothing more beautiful than a personal relationship, a personal encounter with the loving Lord Jesus Christ."

That is central in our understanding of our faith in Jesus Christ. So, our gratitude will open the door to the great giver of all good things—the Lord himself—and our gratitude will also deepen that relationship, that personal encounter with the Lord.

So today, may we not just say thank you for the good things we have received, but may it lead us into an ever deeper relationship of love with the Lord Jesus, from which everything else in the Christian spiritual life flows.