



# 1<sup>ST</sup> SATURDAY DEVOTION NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 2021

## HOW TO MAKE THANKSGIVING AN HONORED, YEAR-LONG HABIT OF GRATITUDE

By Katrina Fernandez

[www.aleteia.org](http://www.aleteia.org)

*Our "attitude of gratitude" becomes a powerful force, if we, like Scrooge at Christmas, work to keep it in our hearts all the year.*

"I will honor Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year."  
Ebenezer Scrooge, in Charles Dickens' [A Christmas Carol](#)

If we were to keep Thanksgiving "all the year," what would it take?

**"Lord, teach me to be generous. Teach me to serve You as You deserve." –St. Ignatius of Loyola**

I love Thanksgiving, mostly because I love food, but also because it's a holiday that doesn't ask anything from us other than our gratitude. Gratitude breeds appreciation, kindness, and humility. You can't have joy without it. Gratitude also cures envy and dissatisfaction.



This Thanksgiving, my wish is to cultivate a spirit of gratitude throughout the year, following the example of the saints.

**"No duty is more urgent than that of returning thanks." – St. Ambrose**

While it's important to thank God for all our blessings, it's equally important to make an effort to extend our gratitude to *everyone* in our lives. Even small gestures of thanks make people feel appreciated and, when practiced enough, make the thanks-giver more attuned to the kindness that abounds everywhere.

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# FEASTS FOR NOVEMBER

The feasts on the General Roman Calendar celebrated during the month of November are:

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|---|--|
| 1 All Saints, Solemnity   | 21 Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe ,<br>Solemnity and Sunday |
| 2 Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed, Feast                         | 22 Cecilia, Memorial   |
| 3 Martin de Porres, Opt. Mem.   | 23 Clement I; Columban; Bl. Miguel Agustín Pro (USA),<br>Opt. Mem.       |
| 4 Charles Borromeo, Memorial  | 24 Andrew Dung-Lac and Companions, Memorial                              |
| 7 Thirty-Second Sunday in Ordinary Time, Sunday                             | 25 Catherine of Alexandria; Thanksgiving Day (USA),<br>Opt. Mem.         |
| 9 Dedication of Lateran Basilica, Feast                                     | 28 First Sunday of Advent, Sunday  |
| 10 Leo the Great, Memorial  | 30 Andrew, Apostle, Feast  |
| 11 Martin of Tours; Veterans Day (USA), Memorial                            |  |
| 12 Josaphat, Memorial   |  |
| 13 Frances Xavier Cabrini, Memorial   |  |
| 14 Thirty-Third Sunday in Ordinary Time, Sunday                             |  |
| 15 Albert the Great, Opt. Mem.  |  |
| 16 Margaret of Scotland; Gertrude, Opt. Mem.                                |  |
| 17 Elizabeth of Hungary, Memorial   |  |
| 18 Churches of Peter and Paul; Rose Philippine<br>Duchesne (USA), Opt. Mem. |  |

The feast of the Presentation of Mary (November 21), is superseded by the Sunday Liturgy. ☐

## THANK YOU

*... a small and simple phrase that comes from a grateful heart!*

*Psalm 106:2*

*We cannot thank you enough Eternal Father for the graces  
You bless us each day to sustain the peaks and valleys of  
our marriage for the last 35 years [and counting ...].  
We pray that you continue to give us Your divine wisdom  
and guidance for we want to honor our covenant with You  
till death do us part. – V & A*

## OUR CENACLE CORNER

Seeking a deeper relationship with God  
through meditation of passages from Holy Scriptures

### Death and Purgation

# GOD TOUCHED ME

*Publish his glorious deeds among the nations.  
Tell everyone about the amazing things he does. — 1 Chronicles 16:24*

## MIKE THROUGH MY EYES: THE WARRIOR IS A CHILD

*By Adel D. Samson*

*Two are better than one because they have a good return for their labor; for if either of them falls, the one will lift up his companion. But woe to the one who falls when there is not another to lift him up! Furthermore, if two lie down together they keep warm, but how can one be warm alone? And if one can overpower him who is alone, two can resist him. A cord of three strands is not quickly torn apart.  
Ecclesiastes 4:9-12*

Listening to all your stories about Mike gives me a deeper appreciation and a better understanding of how he was as a person.

### **Innocent.**

Growing up, Mike, a curious character, constantly asked questions about anything and everything that would pique his interest. He wanted to learn how the world works and I, being his older brother, was taken advantage of that. He assimilated everything as if he were a sponge.

I remember the first time we brought him to a disco, Queue Disco to be exact. We had some guests from NY who wanted to go dancing. So we took them and since Mike was a minor, I greased the woman in the counter to let him in. I pleaded with her to give us special consideration emphasizing that our Mom was with us. Out of understanding, or probably compassion for our little brother to be left outside, she finally agreed to let him in.

As we entered, I saw the look on his face. He was in sheer awe, fascinated by the dancing lights and the loud music. He just looked so overwhelmed. Then, a really funny thing happened. All the ladies from our group started giving their bags to Mike to look after them. The next picture I saw was him with all the bags hanging on both his shoulders with straps crisscrossed as he was just standing by the side of the dance floor seemingly hypnotized by all the strobe lights. He never complained about being made into a bag hanger.

He quietly accepted that role assigned to him. He did not know any better, then!

I approached him and asked how he was. All he said to me was "I never realized Disco was so awesome!"

### **Pessimist**

I noticed that through the years, his pessimism got the better of him. He dwelled on negative thoughts. He was the half-empty glass kind of guy. He always assumed the

worst-case scenario that would cause stress to him and more so, to his loved ones.

Mike: "What if I don't get accepted at Ateneo!"

Me: "Don't worry. There are other schools. I hear La Salle has a good dance course."

Mike: "Stop messin' with me! What if I don't get accepted at La Salle? What if I don't get into a school for college in the next school year?"

Me: "Mike, you haven't even taken the tests from any of these universities and you're already worried. Know the course you want to pursue and pass the entrance tests first. One step at a time!"

Guess what, he ended up graduating from DePaul in Chicago, a Jesuit University

### **Fast forward to 2015**

When he first experienced blood in his poop, he immediately called and said, "I'm scared! What if this is cancer!"

"Mike, relax. It could be just hemorrhoids! Remember, one step at a time!" - but as history would tell it, I was wrong. It was the Big C and we all had to face that with him. I immediately flew to him and supported him with his surgery. It was successful - or so we thought it was.

I got back home, and he'd call me several times a day to ask me the same line of questions. "What if they didn't get the entire lesion? What if it has already metastasized?"

"Don't worry, I said, I'm sure they did. This is a routine procedure for them! Trust your doctors. They're good at what they do."

Admittedly, there were times I failed him as a "Kuya" (title for an older brother) simply because I got tired of his ramblings and negative thoughts.

I am the optimist in my family and he was the pessimist. I tried to teach him to think more positively to make things lighter and brighter. But I failed. It must be his innate personality and I hated it.

In retrospect, I realize now that it was his defense mechanism to prepare himself for whatever battle, life throws his way – including the illness that took his life.

He used his pessimism as a weapon. it was the sword he wielded in battle for the worst possible circumstance.

I did not understand that then, but I get it now!

### **Brave**

Dr. Boc, his HS classmate, claims he was really brave. Was he? From where I'm standing, he faced his battle with cancer head on - no shortcuts, no cheating. He accepted all the challenges thrown his way just like how he accepted being the bag hanger at QUEUE disco. He would still consult me and ask if what he was doing was the right thing - if his decisions regarding his treatment were sound.

On his dying bed, he had the strength to ask me, "Adel, should I still continue my chemo?" "Mike, if you can take it, go ahead. It's really up to you." "Do you think I am suicidal if I stop?" I replied, "No. It's a choice of giving yourself a better quality of life." Here's a guy drugged with morphine because of pain levels off the scale and still had the courage to continue his fight.

He already knew his answers - fighting for dear life till the very end yet still giving me the courtesy of my Kuya-role.

If you ask me, was he really innocent? Fake news!

He knew what was coming. He had already prepared for it!

Was he brave in facing his battle? - You were right, Doc Boc. I believe he truly was.

### **The Warrior Is A Child**

You guys claim that he was always goofy, fun-loving, humorous, caring, thoughtful, loving, and all these great things about him. You all had it really good. What you did not see was how he was at home, with his family. He was not easy to deal with. We all experienced the flip side. He would call us and rant about his pains, worries and fears, without any hint of a positive note.

Whenever he needed to or when he was having a hard time, he would call. When he was fine, he never did. It was just too tiring. We felt taken for granted with our own feelings. We had to constantly deal with the anger and bitterness that enveloped him while you had the good,

jolly, and light side of him. What was already heavy, became a bigger burden to all of us. In retrospect, he just needed us to fuel him with love and compassion each and every time he needed it, unconditionally.

Was that wrong? At that time, I thought it was. I felt it was unfair. I hated his anger. I resented his self-pity and selfishness. I constantly told him to accept and embrace everything he was experiencing and offer it to "Kuya Jess" and He will definitely embrace him back.

Now it dawned on me. "The Warrior Is A Child."

He was already fatigued. He just needed to rest and we, his loved-ones, were his only refuge - his source of strength, his lifeblood.

That's why this song is very appropriate for him. What I thought was my song, is actually, rightfully his.

I'd like to share an excerpt from the song which lyrics really strike me.

*Lately I've been winning battles left to right  
But even winners can get wounded in the fight  
People say that  
I'm amazing*

*I'm strong beyond my years  
But they don't see inside of me I'm hiding all the tears*

*Unafraid because his armor is the best  
But even soldiers need a quiet place to rest  
People say that I'm amazing*

*I never face retreat  
But they don't see the enemies That lay me at his feet*

*[Chorus]*

*They don't know*

*That I come running home when I fall down*

*They don't know*

*Who picks me up when no one is around I drop my sword  
and cry for just a while Cuz deep inside this armor*

*The warrior is a child*

Mike was the BRAVE and PESSIMISTIC WARRIOR WHO WAS REALLY JUST AN INNOCENT CHILD.

MAY WE ALL FIND INSPIRATION IN THE KIND OF LIFE HE LED, LIVES HE TOUCHED, AND THE LOVE THAT HE SHARED. ☐

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Dr Adel Samson is an experienced refractive surgeon in the Philippines. He is not only a LASIK surgeon, but also an exceptional singer, triathlete, shooter, and a diver. He is a graduate of the University of Santo Tomas Medical school and has been in practice for 16 years. Adel and Millie, married for 23 years, have been blessed with equally talented offspring, Isabella (22) and Rico (18).

## SPIRITUAL ENRICHMENT RECOMMENDED

### CREATING A RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SOULS IN PURGATORY

BY VICTOR ARANETA

As we become prayerful and religious, there is one thing we probably ignore, praying for the departed souls. These supposed recipients of our prayers are the most ignored part of our supplications to God.



Paradoxically, they are the most heard prayers once they reach heaven. They do not forget their benefactors whose prayers lifted them up like divine elevators, if you will, to reach the level that will take them to eternal life.

Once they reach their heavenly abode, according to St Thomas Aquinas, these souls will pray for their benefactors and non-benefactors alike once they are invoked. St Gertrude has a special prayer for all these souls in purgatory. Our Lord Jesus promised that every time you say this prayer

asking God Almighty to let His Divine son's blood flow down to these souls, thousands of souls will be lifted up from purgatory and be on a level of progression in the place of purgation. For those who are supposed to be put in the final purgation, this prayer will lift them to their final destination, our heavenly abode.

We really do not know the exact suffering these souls endure on each level of purgation, but one thing is sure, they suffer because of the absence of God's presence in purgatory.

So, every time we pray the supplication: "Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May they Rest in Peace", the Divine Water from the Empyrean throne of God will alleviate their thirst and longing for God Almighty. This is THE GIFT THAT ONLY GOD CAN GIVE THEM. Likewise, praying the Holy Rosary gives souls in purgatory a pathway to heaven in due time.

Let us all be mindful of our role in assisting the poor souls in purgatory in their journey or pilgrimage once they leave this life on earth.

**PRAYER OF ST GERTRUDE THE GREAT:** Eternal Father, I offer You the most Precious Blood of Your Divine Son, Jesus, in union with the Masses said throughout the world today, for all the Holy Souls in Purgatory, for sinners everywhere, for sinners in the Universal Church, those in my own home, and within my family. Amen. ☐

## Upcoming Events

### MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

#### 1<sup>ST</sup> FRIDAY DEVOTION

NOVEMBER 5, 2021 @ 9:30 PM  
IN LOS ANGELES: VIA ZOOM

IN LAS VEGAS:  
AT THE CENACLE HOUSE

#### 1<sup>ST</sup> SATURDAY DEVOTION

NOVEMBER 6, 2021  
MASS AT 10:00 AM  
IN LOS ANGELES: VIA ZOOM

IN LAS VEGAS:  
AT THE CENACLE HOUSE

#### 1<sup>ST</sup> SUNDAY DEVOTION

NOVEMBER 7, 2021  
IN LOS ANGELES:  
THE MONASTERY OF THE ANGELS  
DEVOTIONAL PRAYERS BEGIN  
AT 10:15 AM  
IN LAS VEGAS –  
ST. SHARBEL CATHOLIC CHURCH  
LAS VEGAS, NV 89183  
MASS AT 9:30 AM  
FOLLOWED BY DEVOTIONAL PRAYERS  
AT THE CHAPEL

#### 800 OUR FATHER DEVOTION

IN LAS VEGAS:  
NOVEMBER 20, 2021  
AT THE CENACLE HOUSE

IN LOS ANGELES:  
NOVEMBER 20, 2021  
VIA ZOOM

## HOW TO MAKE THANKSGIVING ...

Thank strangers, thank service workers for good service, thank a friend for thinking of you, send thank-you cards whenever you receive a gift or when someone goes above and beyond. Thank your family and kids when they've done well. Thank a co-worker for being helpful. Never miss an opportunity to show your gratitude. Make saying thank you and showing appreciation your first duty in response to all acts of kindnesses.

**"O God, grant that whatever good things I have, I may share generously with those who have not, and whatever good things I do not have, I may request humbly from those who do." —St. Thomas Aquinas ☐**

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Katrina Fernandez has a PhD in being single, and a master's in single parenting with a concentration in Catholic guilt. She's been writing about these and other life-survival topics for more than a decade. Submit all questions to [@askkatrina@aleteia.org](mailto:@askkatrina@aleteia.org)



## "The Kind of Worshipers the Father Seeks" — [God's Holy Fire](http://www.heartlight.org) [www.heartlight.org](http://www.heartlight.org)

*[Jesus said,]* "Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth." — [John 4:23-24 NIV](#)

### Key Thought

Growing up, I loved to play hide-n-seek. Sometimes I liked to be the one who hid and then was found. Other times, I loved the seeking and discovery of those who were hiding. I especially loved it when there was a surprise find — they surprised me, or I surprised them. In worship, we can love the surprises, but we need to ditch the hiding! God wants us to ask, seek, and knock. He promises to answer, to open the door, and to help us find him. But we need to be aware that God is also seeking us. And as the Father seeks us, the Holy Spirit draws us near and makes the joyous surprise of worship something precious!

### Today's Prayer

O Father, I seek you, so please find me! Use your Holy Spirit to draw me close to you and to my brothers and sisters in Christ. In Jesus' name, I ask this. Amen.

*"I am your Mother Mary.*

*My children continue doing your prayers.  
God is listening on His Throne and my son Jesus is  
your High Priest at his right-hand side.*

*When things are happening like evil has won, do not  
despair for God is doing the right things.*

**REMEMBER**

*it's over when God says it's over.*

*My children, pray, pray, pray  
my beads of rosary of hope and love.  
I'll be with you always.*

*Mary, your Lady of the Rosary  
10162021*