

Spreading Gratitude – Let It Begin with You

The Thanksgiving season sparks an energy and opportunity for many to celebrate *A Month of Gratitude*.

Some participate by creating daily Facebook posts – expressing their love and appreciation for special blessings in their lives. It's a chance to pause and positively reflect on the goodness in our own world. Many will agree that it's easy for us to point out what isn't going well in our lives and we find ourselves com-

plaining because we were overlooked for a promotion or making a sports team we worked so hard to be a part of. It takes a toll on our spirit – and unfortunately, these events are a part of life. However, when we focus on the positive, on the love that surrounds us, the blessings we've received and are able to share with others – the brighter our light will shine.

About a month ago, I took a few minutes to watch a short video on happiness – I found myself intrigued by the gratitude exercise the presenter invited listeners to take part in. She said, "Every evening before you go to bed, share with a friend or family member, **three good things** that happened during your day." She mentioned the *things* can be simple – such as a delicious cup of coffee that morning, a telephone call with someone you miss, or perhaps a smile exchanged with a complete stranger – the intention is to recognize the joy in each day and while we acknowledge the challenges, don't let them take precedence and steal your joy!

After the video, I immediately text messaged my dear friend and workout partner, and asked if she'd like

to join me in this nightly exercise. While she and I are both grateful for our husbands, our children, careers and all of life's basic necessities, we are human and sometimes while boxing or kicking the exercise bag, we gripe and complain! Instead of focusing on those irritations, I found this to be a great moment for us to highlight our daily blessings. I was thrilled when she

agreed to participate! We made a pact and starting that evening, we text messaged our *Three Good Things* experienced that day. Thirty days later, we continue to share our daily joys with one another and every evening, I look forward to her text!

St. Mark's has more than 75 ministries available to us – from Fellowship & Community to Prayer & Worship to Pastoral Care and Social Justice – we are afforded ample resources to help us meet our own personal and spiritual needs. To understand all that is offered, be sure to check out St. Mark's website (<http://stmarksparish.com/ministries-1>).

Spreading love, gratitude and happiness is a gift we can all share. During this season of Thanksgiving, take a moment to thank God for your many blessings and continue to be a blessing to others. May

you be blessed during this holiday season and always!

Written by Bernadette Lawson, member of our Stewardship Committee

