

# Gratitude

Karin Noyes, for the Deacons

I have been hearing a lot lately about how the practice of keeping a gratitude journal is one of the new pillars of health. The idea is simple – each evening recognize and record in a journal, several things that were good in your life that day, even or maybe especially if it was only a small thing. This way of looking at the world forces the glass half full attitude into your consciousness and your actions. It lowers stress and contributes to your general wellbeing. We all have so much to be thankful for and it is good to acknowledge it. A better definition of gratitude follows:

Gratitude means to focus on beauty in the little things of life. To be present to one's own small space of life while stretching to the wide world beyond it to find something to laugh about in every day, to search for and see the good in others, not to take anything about life for granted, to forgive others for their wrongdoing and put the past behind, to be as loving and caring as possible in a world that challenges these virtues. To be at peace with what cannot be changed. – John Predmore, S.J., Northeast Province Jesuit

## Prayer of Gratitude

by Sr. Joyce Rupp

We are grateful for eyes that can see and ponder, for taste buds that know the sensuous pleasures of eating and drinking, for hands that hold and touch and feel, for ears that can delight in music and the voice of a friend, for a nose that can smell the aroma of newly mown grass or delicious food, and can also breathe the air that gives us life.

We are grateful for the treasure of loved ones whose hearts of openness and acceptance have encouraged us to be who we are. We are grateful for their faithfulness, for standing by us when our weaknesses stood out glaringly, for being there when we were most in need and for delighting with us in our good days and our joyful seasons.

We are grateful for the eyes of faith, for believing in the presence of God, giving us hope in our darkest days, encouraging us to listen to our spirit's hunger, and reminding us to trust in the blessings of God's presence in our most empty days.

We are grateful for the ongoing process of becoming who we are, for the seasons within, for the great adventure of life that challenges and comforts us at one and the same time.

We are grateful for the messengers of God—people, events, written or spoken words—that came to us at just the right time and helped us to grow.

We are grateful for God calling us to work with our gifts, grateful that we can be of service and use our talents in a responsible and just way. We are grateful that we have the basic necessities of life, that we have the means and the ability to hear the cries of the poor and to respond with our abundance.

We are grateful for the miracle of life, for the green of our earth, for the amazing grace of our history; we are grateful that we still have time to decide the fate of the world by our choices and our actions, grateful that we have it within our power to bring a divided world to peace.

**Joyce Rupp** is well known for her work as a writer, international retreat leader, and conference speaker. She is the author of numerous bestselling books, including *Praying Our Good-byes*, *Open the Door*, and *Fragments of Your Ancient Name*.