

The Importance of Gratitude

By Deacon Tim Sullivan

It is so fundamental to Christian life to understand that we have nothing of our own and all that we have comes from God. This is a big challenge in a country where personal achievement and recognition receive so much emphasis.

None of us would even exist if it weren't for God's desire to share His love with humanity, so we should have a deep sense of humility and thankfulness for the gift of our lives. I recommend that parents give their children the details of their ancestry as a way of helping the children have a sense of all of the things that had to happen in the past for them to even exist, events the children had no control over.

In addition to our existence, we should thank God for the skills we have, our education, our opportunities, and the people that have contributed to our well-being. Even more important is gratitude for our spiritual blessings, the foremost of which is salvation through Jesus Christ.

Our children should know that through our faith in Jesus, grace becomes active in every aspect of our lives. So all of us should be thankful for having the power to overcome temptation, to choose the good that God offers us and to follow His plan for our lives.

Our gratitude should be constantly expressed with our children in prayers and songs. One of my favorite contemporary hymns is called "Give Thanks."

"In all things give thanks, for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus." 1 Thessalonians 5:18