

Offering # 45 April 2, 2021. In this Holy Week before Easter I am taking a moment to pause to look at GRATITUDE and JOY. “ Never Give Up” to inspire you, practice “Gratitude” with Brené Brown, two Aha moments for reflection, and crusted salmon recipe to savour.

“Gratitude is a feeling that spontaneously emerges from within. However, it is not simply an emotional response; it is also a choice we make. We can choose to be grateful, or we can choose to be ungrateful—to take our gifts and blessings for granted.” unknown

It has been said that gratitude is not only the greatest virtue, but the parent of all others. When I was a little girl I can remember asking my mother , What was the greatest gift you could give someone? And she said simply, “ if you lay down your life for someone that is the greatest gift.” Processing that response now, that was a great deal of information to give a 10 year old. Before I was born my father went off to war in Germany, this was the mindset, they were willing to give up their lives to fight for the freedom of others. They were willing to sacrifice their lives. Have you ever noticed how our older generation - they are grateful for everything in their lives, a smile or wave through the window, a card, a meal, a phone call or a visit? Not surprising November 11th services are so powerful.

We come to Holy week leading up to Easter, Good Friday rings clear, John 3:16 , “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but will have eternal life.” An action of ultimate love and sacrifice for us.

What does he ask of us? Simply put. Love God, with all your heart, soul, and mind and love your neighbour, as yourself.

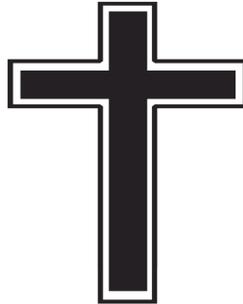
With affection and blessings, Deacon Kate Ann

People talk of the sacrifice I have made in spending too much of my life in Africa. Can that be called a sacrifice which is simply paid back as a small part of a great debt owing to our God which we can never repay? It is emphatically no sacrifice. Say rather it is a privilege .

David Livingston

It is a terrible thing to be grateful and have no one to thank, to be awed and have no one to worship.

Philip Yancy



Lenten Fast by Pope Francis

Fast from hurting words and say kind words
Fast from sadness and be filled with gratitude
Fast from anger and be filled with patience
Fast from pessimism and be filled with hope
Fast from worries and trust in God
Fast from complaints and contemplate simplicity
Fast from pressures and be prayerful
Fast from bitterness and fill your heart with joy
Fast from selfishness and be compassionate to others
Fast from grudges and be reconciled
Fast from words be silent and listen

A repeat of Pope Francis to challenge to us as we continue to hunker down under the pressure of the pandemic that has transformed the ease of relationships with our families and changed the world we used to know.

NEVER GIVE UP – Life is an Incredible Show! *Unknown*

“You can have flaws, be anxious, and even be angry, but do not forget that your life is the greatest enterprise in the world. Only you can stop it from going bust. Many appreciate you, admire you and love you.

Remember that to be happy is not to have a sky without a storm, a road without accidents, work without fatigue, relationships without disappointments.

To be happy is to find strength in forgiveness, hope in battles, security in the stage of fear, love in discord. It is not only to enjoy the smile, but also to reflect on the sadness. It is not only to celebrate the successes, but to learn lessons from the failures. It is not only to feel happy with the applause, but to be happy in anonymity.

Being happy is not a fatality of destiny, but an achievement for those who can travel within themselves. To be happy is to stop feeling like a victim and become your destiny's author. It is to cross deserts, yet to be able to find an oasis in the depths of our soul. It is to thank God for every morning, for the miracle of life.

Being happy is not being afraid of your own feelings. It's to be able to talk about you. It is having the courage to hear a "no". It is confidence in the face of criticism, even when unjustified. It is to kiss your children, pamper your parents, to live poetic moments with friends, even when they hurt us.

To be happy is to let live the creature that lives in each of us, free, joyful and simple.

It is to have maturity to be able to say: "I made mistakes".

It is to have the courage to say "I am sorry".

It is to have the sensitivity to say, "I need you".

It is to have the ability to say "I love you".

**May your life become a garden of opportunities for happiness ...
That in spring may it be a lover of joy. In winter a lover of wisdom.
And when you make a mistake, start all over again.**

**For only then will you be in love with life. You will find that to be
happy is not to have a perfect life. But use the tears to irrigate
tolerance.**

**Use your losses to train patience.
Use your mistakes to sculptor serenity.**

**Use pain to plaster pleasure.
Use obstacles to open windows of intelligence.**

**Never give up
Never give up on people who love you.**

**Never give up on happiness,
for life is an incredible show”**

unknown

**God’s wonderful works which happened daily are lightly esteemed,
not because they are of no importance but because they happened
so constantly and without interruption .**

Martin Luther

**It's a funny thing about life, once you begin to take note of the things
that you are grateful for, you begin to lose sight of the things you
lack.**

Germany Kent

PRACTICING GRATITUDE for Everyone

Dr. Brené Brown, is one of my favourite authors, a leader in human relationships, and presenter of Ted Talks (*The Power of Vulnerability*, Top 5 Ted Talks). She is inspirational and practical in her ideas on shame, empathy, resiliency, courage and gratitude. Any of her books are worth having. Excellent!!

This is Brené Brown's conversation on "The Practice of Gratitude"

"The relationship between joy and gratitude was one of the important things I found in my research. I wasn't expecting it. In my 12 years of research on 11,000 pieces of data, I did not interview one person who had described themselves as joyful, who also did not actively practice gratitude.

For me it was very counterintuitive because I went into the research thinking that the relationship between joy and gratitude was: if you are joyful, you should be grateful. But it wasn't that way at all. Instead, practicing gratitude invites joy into our lives.

Practice is the part that really changed my life, that really changed my family and the way we live every day. When I say practice gratitude, I don't mean "the-attitude-of-gratitude" or feeling grateful, I mean *practicing gratitude*.

These folks shared in common a tangible gratitude practice. Some of them kept gratitude journals. Some of them did interesting things like at 1,2,3,4 or 12:34 every day they said something out loud that they were grateful for in their lives.

What's interesting is, when we first started, I thought my children were going to say, "Oh, mom, are you experimenting on us?" There was a little bit of that. But after we had done this for a of couple weeks, even on those crazy, busy nights, when we were trying to get to soccer, piano and homework, if Steve and I said a quick prayer and started eating, my kids were like, "Woah...what are you grateful for?"

It's not joy that makes us grateful, it's gratitude that makes us joyful.

It's been extraordinary because not only does it invite more joy into our house, it also is such a soulful window into what is going on in my kids' lives. There are some days when my eighth-grader will say,

"I'm joyful that there is a huge thick wall between my room and my brother's room." She'll say something very honest. But recently she had a friend whose mother died. For a month she would say, "I'm just so grateful you all are healthy right now."

Not only did it make us all more aware of what we had and more willing to slow down and really be thankful for the joyful moments we had, but it also let me know where she was emotionally in her life.

One of the things we do as a family is say grace at dinner. And so now, after learning about practicing gratitude, after grace we go around and everyone says something that they are all thankful for

My son often says, "I'm grateful for bugs." "I'm grateful for frogs." But sometimes he'll say, "I'm grateful that you picked me up early," or "I'm grateful that I finally understand adjectives."

There is a great quote by a Jesuit priest that says, "It's not joy that makes us grateful, it's gratitude that makes us joyful." I guess I was just amazed to see that bubble up in my research so quickly. It's life changing."

Gratitude, then JOY

There are flowers everywhere for those who want to see them.

Henri Matis

“Aha moments” *with thanks to deacon Fran Langlois*



A boat was docked in a tiny Mexican fishing village.

A tourist complimented the local fishermen on the quality of their fish and... asked how long it took to catch them.

"Not very long" they answered in unison.

"Why didn't you stay out longer and catch more?"

The fishermen explained that their small catches were sufficient to meet their needs and those of their families.

"But what do you do with the rest of your time?"

"We sleep late, fish a little, play with our children, and take siestas with our wives. In the evenings, we go into the village to see our friends, have a few drinks, play the guitar, and sing a few songs. We have a full life."

The tourist interrupted, "I have an MBA from Harvard and I can help you! You should start by fishing longer every day. You can then sell the extra fish you catch. With the extra revenue, you can buy a bigger boat."

"And after that?"

"With the extra money the larger boat will bring, you can buy a second one and a third one and so on until you have an entire fleet of trawlers.

Instead of selling your fish to a middle man, you can then negotiate directly with the processing plants and maybe even open your own plant. You can then leave this little village and move to Mexico City, Los Angeles, or even New York City!!! From there you can direct your huge new enterprise."

"How long would that take?"

"Twenty, perhaps twenty-five years." replied the tourist.

"And after that?"

"Afterwards? Well my friend, that's when it gets really interesting," answered the tourist, laughing. "When your business gets really big, you can start buying and selling stocks and make millions!"

"Millions? Really? And after that?" asked the fishermen.

"After that you'll be able to retire, live in a tiny village near the coast, sleep late, play with your children, catch a few fish, take a siesta with your wife and spend your evenings drinking and enjoying your friends."

"With all due respect sir, but that's exactly what we are doing now. So what's the point wasting twenty-five years?" asked the Mexicans.

And the moral of this story is:

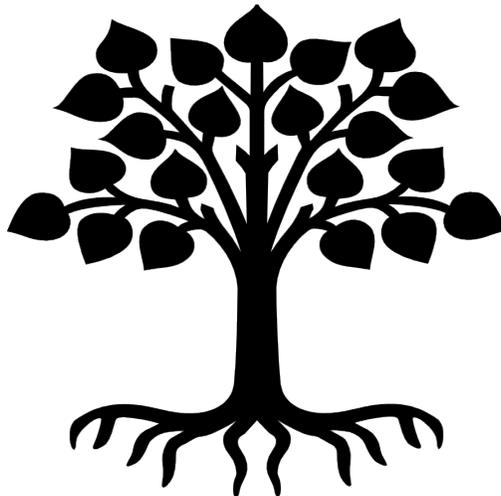
Know where you're going in life, you may already be there!

Many times in life, money is not everything.

"Live your life before life becomes lifeless"

*Life is not something
we manage to hammer together,
it is an unfathomable gift.
unknown*

Couldn't resist this "Aha moment" Leonardo de Vinci branches out



A fractal is a pattern that the laws of nature repeat at different scales, examples are everywhere in the forest, trees are natural fractals- patterns that repeat similar and smaller copies of themselves to create the biodiversity of a forest fossils. Leonardo da Vinci studied the fractal nature of trees noting all the branches of a tree at every stage of its height when put together equal the thickness to the trunk this growth pattern in which the size and thickness of trees branches correlate to the size and thickness of its trunk has become known as Leonardo's rule of trees.

Salmon with Honey Mustard and Pecan Panko Crust

**2 tablespoons Dijon mustard
2 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
1 tablespoon honey
3/4 teaspoon salt, divided
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1/4 cup panko
1/4 cup finely chopped pecans
1teaspoons finely chopped parsley (optional, for color)
1(6-oz) salmon fillets
1 lemon, for serving (optional) .**

Preheat the oven to 450°F and set an oven rack in the middle position. Line a baking sheet with aluminum foil for easy cleanup, and spray with nonstick cooking spray.

In a small bowl, whisk together the mustard, melted butter, honey, 1/2 teaspoon salt, and pepper. Set aside.

In another small bowl, mix together the panko, pecans, parsley (if using), and remaining 1/4 teaspoon salt.

Spoon the honey-mustard mixture evenly over the salmon fillets. (Don't worry if it drips down the sides a little.) Sprinkle the panko-pecan mixture over the glaze, pressing it lightly so it adheres.

Bake for 7-10 minutes per inch of thickness, depending on how well done you like your salmon. (If you find that the topping is browning more than you'd like before the fish is cooked through, loosely cover the salmon with foil.) Serve hot or at room temperature. (Note that if your salmon has skin, it may stick to the foil; to remove the fish from the pan, slide a thin spatula between the skin and the flesh, leaving the skin behind.)

Make Ahead: The salmon can be glazed, coated with the panko-pecan mixture, and refrigerated up to 3 hours ahead of time.