

St. Matthew Moms Group

Body, Mind, Spirit

Grow in Gratitude



In this month of Thanksgiving, it's the perfect time to think about the importance of Gratitude for our *whole* being – our minds, our bodies, and our souls.

In *The Gospel of Happiness: Rediscover Your Faith Through Spiritual Practice and Positive Psychology* Dr. Christopher Kaczor shares his discoveries for why gratitude is so important from both a scientific and spiritual perspective. Through his research, Dr. Kaczor notes that practicing gratitude leads to:

- Increased feelings of energy, alertness, enthusiasm, and vigor
- Success in achieving personal goals
- Better coping with stress
- A sense of closure in traumatic memories
- Bolstered feelings of self-worth and self-confidence
- Generosity and helpfulness
- Greater sense of purpose and resilience

In his book, Dr. Kaczor shared three simple ways to grow in gratitude.

1. The Three Good Things

Dr. Kaczor shares a simple and *very effective* way to grow in Gratitude

each day:

At the end of the day, simply think over how the day went looking for whatever went well—a tasty nectarine at lunch, a funny conversation with a neighbor, a task finally off the “to do” list, or a moment of relaxation with hot coffee. Once you’ve come up with three things, you write down what happened and why it happened. Research indicated that “Three Blessings Exercise” [or the Three Good Things] reduces depression and helps increase happiness by making us more aware of the good things that are already in our lives to which we may have not paid much attention. Centuries ago in his *Spiritual Exercises*, St. Ignatius Loyola recommended something like “Three Blessing Exercise” in what is called [the Examen](#). When we look for what is good we are more likely to find and celebrate what is good. When we thank God for the joys we find in life, our gratitude is enhanced.

2. Keep a Gratitude Journal

Each day, write about these things you are thankful for:

- Monday – Gifts from others.

- Tuesdays – A good you’ve enjoyed but that will end soon.
- Wednesdays – A good that we have that could not have been.
- Thursdays – Whom we are grateful for and why.
- Fridays – Something bad leading to something good.
- Saturdays & Sundays – It’s the weekend, enough said!

3. A Gratitude Letter

Write a Gratitude Letter to someone in your life you are thankful for, send it to them or even visit them and read it to them. (Bring tissues!) In this way, you are not only increasing your own happiness but also sharing that gift with another by extending the gratitude from within to the outside world. Who knows, maybe that person will follow your lead and do the same for another and create a domino effect of Gratitude around the world.

How do you grow in Gratitude?

<https://catholicmom.com/2015/11/16/three-ways-to-grow-in-gratitude/>

Remembering our loved ones this month...

Merciful Father,
Hear our prayer and console us. As we renew our faith in
Your Son, whom You raised from the dead,
strengthen our hope that all our departed
brothers and sisters will share in His resurrection,
who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.
Amen
Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and may perpetual light
shine upon them.
May their souls and all the souls of the faithfully departed,
through the mercy of God, rest in peace.
Amen



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Reminders:

- *Holy Yoga at our Moms Meeting on November 30th. Bring your towel and water bottle for this one!*
- *The annual Family Life Ministry Advent Wreath Making will be Sunday, December 3rd at 12pm.*
- *Childcare reservations are required for Moms meetings. Please call ahead 48hrs in advance 704-543-7677.*

Autumn Self-Care Plan

"Take care of your body as if you were going to live forever; and take care of your soul as if you were going to die tomorrow."

~Saint Augustine

Button yourself up in pumpkin spice and phenomenal foliage this autumn, and don't miss these fall-inspired self-care ideas:

1. Exercise Outside.

As the temperatures cool down and the landscape transforms into radiant golds, reds, oranges, and yellows, take advantage of opportunities to exercise outdoors.

2. Take a Warm Bath.

Ease the day's tensions and release the shivers of that first autumn cold snap with a [warm bath before bed](#). In addition to cleansing and hydrating your skin, a warm bath can help relieve that annoying seasonal sinus pressure as well as reduce muscle pain. Cooling off from a warm bath right before bed

has also been shown to help promote better and longer sleep.

3. Add Scents to Your Home.

The aromas of pumpkin spice lattes, Thanksgiving dinner cooking, and holiday cookies baking seem to permeate the final few months of the year. But did you know, some fall scents can actually boost your brain health?

[Peppermint](#) has been shown to enhance cognitive functioning and relieve pain. Cinnamon may aid memory. Vanilla can elevate feelings of joy and relaxation, and pumpkin might even serve as an aphrodisiac.

4. Incorporate Fall Super foods.

Take your autumn meal planning to the next level this season by incorporating fall super foods that

are both symbolic of the season as well as super healthy for you. Rich with potassium, acorn and butternut squash can be melded into sweet and savory dishes.

5. Volunteer.

The final months of the year are ripe with service opportunities as nonprofits and charities are looking for generous holiday givers. Caring for others is one of the greatest ways to take care of yourself.

6. Create a Holiday Bucket List.

Take the fresh pause autumn offers to make your holiday bucket list. That's a list that captures all the things you want to accomplish this holiday season.

For more ideas, continue reading [here](#).

In Angels' Care

*"God bids his angels to bear us away from dangers."
~Psalm 91*

The details worried me: scheduling, buying tickets online, shuffling paperwork for hosting an overseas friend for a month. What if I made an error?

Instead of "letting go and letting God" late one evening, my mind played our worst-case scenarios of all that could ground my family's guest on his side of the ocean. I reached for a fresh pillowcase. Out of an obscure corner of our linen closet emerged an old one belonging to my now seventeen-year-old son. The image of Saint Michael the Archangel flanked a prayer for protection to this saint.

"Okay, I want this one tonight," I called to my husband, holding up the case. I chuckled when my husband flipped over his pillow, revealing an image of a guardian angel with the classic "Angel of God, my guardian dear," prayer – an old treasure belonging to my other son. Angels pillowed our sleep that night. That little happening helped reset my heart onto a more peaceful, confident track.

Feeling that the trip's success depended on my efficiency and doubting God's guidance was prideful. Humbly pleading for heaven's aid and trusting that this aid would be given made me like an angel, according to Saint Augustine. This fourth-century saint said, "It was pride that changed angels into devils; it is humility that makes men as angels."

Dear Lord, thank you for giving us into the care of angels. Help us be as humble and trusting as angels.

To Ponder: Mothers are designed to multitask and fix life's problems large and small. Do you bear burdens alone, or do you give your worries to God and the care of his angels, especially your guardian angel?

By Marianna Bartholomew
Taken from [The Catholic Mom's Prayer Companion: A Book of Daily Reflections](#) by Lisa M. Hendey, Sarah A. Reinhard



Four Ways the Family Can Imitate the Trinity

"The human family is, in a certain sense, the icon of the Trinity because of the love between its members and the fruitfulness of that love."

— Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI

God wants us to know and love him intimately. But how do you get to know someone you've never seen? One way is to send them a picture. This is exactly what God does by creating the family. We all know human beings are made in the image and likeness of God (Gn 1:27), but God isn't an individual; he is Trinity — a communion of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. If we were going to

draw a picture of God, it wouldn't look like one person, it would look like a communion of persons. It would look like a family!

But if families are called to be the picture of God's face to the world, how can we make sure that the image of God the world sees when they look at our families is clear, bright and in focus?

• **Pray together:** Families need to pray and worship together to learn how to love one another with the love that comes from God's own heart.

• **Love deeply:** The love between Father, Son and Holy Spirit knows

no bounds. Our families are also called to love one another deeply. A family that doesn't have time to be together cannot learn to be the team that represents the togetherness of the Trinity.

• **Love generously:** The purer a love is, the more it longs to be shared. God creates because he loves. Work to make your family a deeply loving place, and consider the many ways you might be able to share that love.

• **Love joyfully:** God asks those he loves to rejoice in that love (Phil 4:4). He wants us to

live life more abundantly (Jn 10:10). Celebrate your life as a family. Create rituals for working, talking and praying together — and most of all, playing together! Remember Pope Francis' encouragement, telling parents to "waste time with your children."

God wants your family to become an amazing work of art that shows his face of love to the world. Let him make something beautiful in you!

By Greg & Lisa Popcak, OSV Newsweekly
Read the entire article [here](#)

Saint Martin de Porres – Saint of the Month for November

Some people do good no matter what happens to them. Martin de Porres did. His mother was an African or Indian from Panama, a former slave. His father was a Spanish soldier and nobleman. So people made fun of Martin because he came from two different races.

What did Martin do? He blessed his enemies; he did good to those who laughed at him. Was this easy? No. But Martin simply loved to do good.

Martin was born in Lima, Peru, in 1579. His father left his family when Martin was eight. This left Martin and his baby sister and their mother very poor. But Martin still gave away whatever he could to other hungry and poor people.

When he was 12, Martin went to

work for a barber. He learned to cut hair and to heal wounds. Later, Martin wanted to join the Dominicans in their work. He was allowed to work with them as a servant who swept floors and answered the door (at the time, the law in Peru did not allow persons of other races or mixed race to enter religious life.) But finally, his years of good works and miraculous cures led the Dominicans to allow him to become a lay brother. But even some of his fellow Dominicans still scorned him.

He eventually founded orphanages for homeless children and cared for lonely African slaves who had been forced to come to Lima. He gave shirts to those who had no clothes; bread to those who had no food; shelter to those who had no homes.

One of his closest friends was St. Rose of Lima.

In 1639, Martin died. Everyone in Lima mourned him, even bishops and members of the royal court in Lima. In 1962, the Church declared that Martin de Porres was a saint. Many statues of St. Martin de Porres show him holding a broom, with a dog, cat and mouse at his feet; he loved animals and was said to have solved a rat problem by simply asking the rats to leave. The house where he was born has been well preserved in Lima.

He is the patron saint of persons of mixed race and of those who suffer from discrimination.

<http://saintsresource.com/martin-de-porres>



"Everything, even sweeping, scraping vegetables, weeding a garden and waiting on the sick could be a prayer if it were offered to God."
- St. Martin de Porres

Pope Francis declares 35 new saints

Like the Catholic Church's newest saints, Christians are called to live their faith as a love story with God who wants a relationship that is "more than that of devoted subjects with their king," Pope Francis said. Without a loving relationship with God, Christian life can become empty and "an impossible ethic, a collection of rules and laws to obey for no good reason," the pope said during Mass Oct. 15 in St. Peter's Square.

"This is the danger: a Christian life that becomes routine, content with 'normality,' without drive or enthusiasm, and with a short memory," he said during the Mass. At the beginning of the Mass, Pope Francis proclaimed 35 new saints, including: the "Martyrs of Natal," Brazil, a group of 30 priests,

laymen, women and children who were killed in 1645 during a wave of anti-Catholic persecution; and the "Child Martyrs of Tlaxcala," three children who were among Mexico's first native converts and were killed for refusing to renounce the faith. Tapestries hung from the facade of St. Peter's Basilica bearing images of the martyrs as well as pictures of Sts. Angelo da Aciri, an Italian Capuchin priest known for his defense of the poor, and Faustino Miguez, a Spanish priest who started an advanced school for girls at a time when such education was limited almost exclusively to boys. An estimated 35,000 pilgrims -- many of them from the new saints' countries of origin -- attended the Mass, the Vatican said Oct. 15. In his homily, Pope Francis

reflected on the day's Gospel reading from St. Matthew in which Jesus recounts the parable of the wedding feast.

Noting Jesus' emphasis on the wedding guests, the pope said that God "wants us, he goes out to seek us and he invites us" to celebrate with him.

"For him, it is not enough that we should do our duty and obey his laws," Pope Francis said. "He desires a true communion of life with us, a relationship based on dialogue, trust and forgiveness." However, he continued, Jesus also warns that "the invitation can be refused" as it was by those who "made light" of the invitation or were too caught up in their own affairs to consider attending the banquet.

"This is how love grows cold, not

out of malice but out of preference for what is our own: our security, our self-affirmation, our comfort," the pope said. Despite constant rejection and indifference, God does not cancel the wedding feast but continues to invite Christians to overcome "the whims of our peevish and lazy selves" and to imitate the church's new saints who, he said, not only said yes to God's invitation, but wore "the wedding garment" of God's love. "The saints who were canonized today, and especially the many martyrs, point the way," Pope Francis said. "The robe they wore daily was the love of Jesus, that 'mad' love that loved us to the end and offered his forgiveness and his robe to those who crucified him." [~OSV Newsweekly article](#)

Feast of Christ the King – Sunday November 26th

Pope Pius XI instituted the Feast of Christ the King in his 1925 encyclical, *Quas Primas*, in response to growing nationalism and secularism.

If ever we needed Christ proclaimed as King, it is now. First, we need to reclaim him as King in our own lives and in our own homes. Then we need to pray for him to be King of our nation and world.

This feast ends the liturgical year. It also ends the "story" of Jesus with all the end time readings that we hear at Mass. In the end, He will reign as King forever! If you need an excuse for friends to

gather, then this is it. Have a Sunday afternoon party or brunch after mass to celebrate Christ the King. With Thanksgiving so close and Advent starting soon, this may be the kind of relaxed gathering you need (or it might take you over the edge!) If you do, be sure to pray the glorious mysterious of the rosary sometime during your party.

To celebrate this feast day in your home (or at your party.) Make your favorite cake into a "crown cake." This can be done by putting fancy "crown-like" cookies around the outside, triangular shaped chocolate around the outside, putting a home-

made cardboard crown on the top, or using a kid's costume King crown on the top. There are even "crown" cake pans that could be used. This will be the centerpiece of your table and focus of the day. If you have children who love to make stuff, then set up a crown-making station. Use strips of colored paper that fit around a child's head. Have "jewels" and other decorations to glue onto the strips.

Dinner Discussion: Does Christ reign as King in my life and in our home? How can we do this better?

<https://www.catholicmommyblogs.com/sunday-nov-20-christ-king/>

PRAYER TO CHRIST THE KING

O Christ Jesus, I acknowledge You as King of the universe. All that has been created has been made for You. Exercise over me all Your rights. I renew my baptismal promises, renouncing Satan and all his work and pomp. I promise to live a good Christian life and to do all in my power to procure the triumph of the rights of God and Your Church. Divine Heart of Jesus, I offer you my poor actions in order to obtain that all hearts may acknowledge Your Sacred Royalty, and that thus the reign of Your peace may be established throughout the universe.
Amen.

Feasts for November

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

1. [All Saints, Solemnity](#)
2. [All Souls, Feast](#)
3. [Martin de Porres, Opt. Mem.](#)
4. [Charles Borromeo, Memorial](#)
5. [Thirty-First Sunday in Ordinary Time, Sunday](#)
9. [Lateran Basilica, Feast](#)
10. [Leo the Great, Memorial](#)
11. [Martin of Tours; Veterans Day \(USA\), Memorial](#)
12. [Thirty-Second Sunday in Ordinary Time, Sunday](#)
13. [Frances Xavier Cabrini, Memorial](#)
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 Duchesne \(USA\), Opt. Mem.](#)
19. [Thirty-Third Sunday in Ordinary Time, Sunday](#)
21. [Presentation of Mary, Memorial](#)
22. [Cecilia, Memorial](#)
23. [Clement I; Columban; Bl. Miguel Agustin Pro \(USA\); Thanksgiving Day, Opt. Mem.](#)
24. [Andrew Dung-Lac and Companions, Memorial](#)
25. [Catherine of Alexandria, Opt. Mem.](#)
26. [Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe, Solemnity](#)
30. [Andrew, Feast](#)

Moms Fall Meeting Dates

Thursday Mornings:
November 2, 30
December 14*
All meeting times are 10am – 12pm in NLC 239/240/241

*Christmas brunch and service project, more information to come!

November 2017 – Liturgical Year Overview for the Month

- ❖ The month of November is dedicated to the [Souls in Purgatory](#), whose feast is celebrated on November 2. With the exception of the last Sunday, the entire month of November falls during the liturgical season known as [Ordinary Time](#) and is represented by the liturgical color green.
- ❖ The Holy Father's Intentions for the Month of November 2017:
Christians in Asia: That Christians in Asia, bearing witness to the Gospel in word and deed, may promote dialogue, peace, and mutual understanding, especially with those of other religions. (See also <http://www.popesprayerusa.net/>)
- ❖ Highlights:
 - **November 26th – Feast of Christ the King.** This feast is a public, social and official declaration of the royal rights of Jesus, as God the Creator, as The Word Incarnate, and as Redeemer.
 - **Recipe of the Month: Hungarian Goulash,** the Hungarian version of pot roast. Known as gulyás in Hungary, this is a stew made with beef or other meat and vegetables and flavored with Hungarian paprika. This is offered in honor of all the saints who come from Hungary.
 - **Activity of the Month: All Saints Day Procession** November 1st is a good day to celebrate with your family. If there are children involved, saints costumes, goodies and games such as bobbing for apples or snap apples (a variation) and playing "Whose my Saint" are suggested.

Resources and Reads – Click for link

- ❖ [10 November Activities for Catholic Families](#)
- ❖ [Autumn Self-Care Challenge](#)
Dominee loves autumn and likens herself to a tree letting its leaves fall. “No, don’t need that one anymore. Let go of that one too.” What leaves can you let fall? Check out this [challenge!](#)
- ❖ Meal idea: [Panera Bread’s Autumn Squash Soup](#)
- ❖ Count your blessings with this [Thankful Pumpkin Activity](#) or [Make A Gratitude Box](#)
- ❖ [21 Conversation Starters on Gratitude](#) – Start a new family tradition at the Thanksgiving table!
- ❖ Reads:
 - [God is Not Fair and Other Reasons for Gratitude](#) by Daniel P. Horan, OFM
 - [The Friendship Project, The Catholic Woman's Guide to Making and Keeping Fabulous, Faith-Filled Friends](#) by Michele Faehle and Emily Jaminet
 - [The Gospel of Happiness: Rediscover Your Faith Through Spiritual Practice and Positive Psychology](#) by Dr. Christopher Kaczor
 - [Angels and Saints: A Biblical Guide to Friendship with God’s Holy Ones](#) by Scott Hahn

St. Matthew Upcoming Events

- 11/1. All Saints Day Masses
- 11/2. All Souls Day Masses
- 11/6. Allen Ames Healing Service, 7pm
- 11/10-11. Men’s CRHP Retreat
- 11/16. St. Peregrine Healing Prayer Service, 7:30p
- 11/18. Advent Retreat 9:30am
- 11/19. Knights of Columbus Breakfast, 8am
- 11/23. Thanksgiving Mass, 9am

Please keep in your prayers this month our parish’s Confirmation candidates and Reconciliation students. Retreats will be held and the Sacraments will be celebrated this month. What a very special time for these holy children of God!

Please see bulletin or [church website](#) for more information.

St. Matthew Moms Group

Mission: St. Matthew Mom’s Group supports the vocation of motherhood by strengthening faith through various readings including Scripture, the Catechism and various books applicable to Christian family life. Many moms find the open discussion format to be encouraging and inspiring in developing loving parenting tools and creating a solid Catholic domestic church.

St. Matthew Mom’s Group meets every other Thursday throughout the school year. You can drop in for a session at your convenience or attend them all. All mothers are welcome!

Contact Info:

Co-Leaders:
Catherine Sforza
lovemuffin0510@aol.com
Genevieve Roy Holmes
genevievegroy@hotmail.com

Communications:
Becky Lennard
becky.lennard@gmail.com