

# Live a life of gratitude

November always brings several things to mind. It has traditionally been a time when we pray for those who have gone before us and give thanks for the ordinary saints, living and deceased, who have touched our lives. We also celebrate Thanksgiving, which is supposed to be the favorite holidays of most Americans.

Every time I go to a wake or funeral – and I have been to many lately – and hear the beautiful comments made about the persons who died, I cannot help but wonder how many of those things were said to that person when he or she was alive?

Recently I wrote a eulogy about one of our sisters who was a good friend of mine. Many people expressed that she was one of the most generous and caring persons they had ever known. She often anticipated others' needs and was always willing to go the extra mile for others even when she may not have felt so well herself.

As I delivered the words at her wake service I hoped that she really knew how much she was loved and appreciated. My fantasy was that she was looking down from heaven surprised at just how much people cared about her and wondered why they hadn't expressed how grateful they were for her when she was alive.

It is experiences such as these that continue to remind me of the importance of living a life of gratitude, gratitude to God for all of his gifts, especially for the people who have touched my life.

Often I have written about the people of Uganda, East Africa, who have the tradition of thanking others – and God – for everything in their lives, from giving thanks for a new day to thanking others for listening to them or smiling at them.

The Ugandan people are a reminder to me of the importance of being a grateful person and to show and voice my love and appreciation of the people and gifts in my life. It is all too easy to take others and our blessings for granted.

November is a good time to think about and pray for all those people, living and dead, who have touched our lives. And for those who are still amongst the living, to make an effort to tell them how much we appreciate them and thank God for

however they have touched our lives.

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