

April 17, 2020 Article 8

Greetings Brothers and Sisters,

In times of crisis it is easy to forget to be grateful. As we engage in prayer these days we are probably focused rather intensely on escape from this present crisis. In the midst of this challenge to our health and economic well-being, we may be suffering some elements of fear, worry, angst, frustration, and maybe even anger. We may not be in these states of mind continually, but perhaps we drift in and out of them. We yearn for better times; for the old times; of times just a couple of months ago. We might even be questioning God, "Why?" These are truly challenging times which have only begun and without great good fortune there may be worse to come. We do not know the future; hence, we should prepare for the worst, but hope and pray for the best. With this present distress so vividly pressed upon us, it is easy to forget to give thanks.

Therefore, I am thinking today of things for which we should all be thankful. The following is a prayer of thanks for some of those things. Let us pray:

Dear Lord:

1. We are truly thankful for all those people who are tending to the sick and dying, who are giving comfort to the distressed, who are working daily on the front line of the virus, and who are daily exposed to the threat themselves.
2. We are thankful for all those companies that are so often maligned, perhaps sometimes properly so, but are working seven days a week and 24 hours a day not only to produce supplies that were in grossly short supply for a pandemic, but also for cures, remedies, and preventive treatments. We are so many are supplying materials and services at cost or no cost. We are thankful for their skill, genius, and effort.
3. We are thankful for the intelligence and expertise of the medical experts who rapidly established the framework with which to meet this unexpected pandemic that has invaded our nation and by which we can minimize the tragedy and find a pathway to safety.
4. We are thankful for the president we have in office this day who has demonstrated noteworthy skill to mobilize government, industry, and the medical community into a smoothly functioning whole, even in the midst of hostile opposition. We are thankful for the tireless labors of our president and his administration.
5. We are thankful that so many citizens have cooperated with the national strategy to mitigate the epidemic. We are thankful this unity of purpose has given the country time to arm for the resistance.
6. We are thankful for Ryan who has worked diligently and tirelessly to set up a Facebook process that we did not have so that we can assemble remotely, still worship together, and by which help us to maintain a spiritual focus. We are thankful for his insightful messages, his family, and all his labors in any and every capacity.
7. We are thankful for our elders for their cooperation in mitigation policies that keep us from congregating to our detriment and for keeping a message of hope and encouragement before us.

8. We are thankful for all those who log onto the online worship periods and devotionals; for all the participation that encourages those responsible for bringing the spiritual encouragement to us; that shows appreciation for the efforts made to bring it about; that demonstrates a unity of purpose in the body.
9. Last, but not all, and by far not least, we are humbly thankful to our God that He has shielded us thus far from the harshest and most disturbing elements of this historic challenge. We thank Him for leading us into this dark valley and continue to thank Him in advance knowing He will lead us through it. We thank the Lord for directing us always through the travails of this world into the full realization of His marvelous light. We thank Him for His Spirit that leads us in the process of personal transformation and into the confidence that He hears and will heed our prayers.
10. We close, Father, praying that you will help us not to weary of our journey with Jesus; that we will with patience and perseverance remain in the shelter of His Shepherding; that we will resign ourselves with hope to whatever the outcome will be; that we will keep our eyes fixed on Jesus Christ, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross (Heb. 12:2).

Now may the Lord bless us and keep us; may His light shine upon us and grant us peace.

Offered in the name of Jesus, our Lord and Savior, Master and Brother