



Reflections on 'The Greater Things'

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"Amen, Amen, I say to you, whoever believes in me will do the works that I do, and will do greater things than these, because I am going to the Father." (John 14:12)

PRAISE GOD IN ALL THINGS By: Kathy Wilcox

Who are we? We are known as Charismatic. We are blessed with the gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit, and because we love the Lord, we praise Him in prayer and worship in song.

Of course, it is easy to praise God when things are going well and not so easy when they are not. Yet scriptures and teaching insist that we should "Praise God in all things" (1 Thessalonians 5:18), not just on good days. Another on the list of scriptures encouraging praise was one of the Psalms. Instead of just reading the one cited, I opened my bible and read them all. Wow! David's story is captivating! He provides an excellent example of praise versus self-pity. Through reading the Book of Psalms, I discovered the Psalms are personal, the testimony of David's faith journey.

As a young shepherd, Samuel anointed David to be the next King after Saul. He found himself in Saul's court and best friends with Saul's son Jonathan. Things were going great! When he killed the giant Goliath with his slingshot, he became known and loved by all. He was so admired that old King Saul got jealous and decided to have him killed.

Abruptly, David found his whole world changed. He became a fugitive, hiding in caves and out in the desert, even forced to leave his home country so that Saul's people would not kill him. He was often cold, hungry, and even stalked by wild animals. From the King's court to the desert was quite a comedown. David spent thirteen years evading Saul. Thirteen years is a long time. God could have intervened, yet He did not.

In retrospect, we can see that God used this time for David to mature, grow stronger in his faith, and learn to

depend totally on God. God was preparing him to be a wise king. But I doubt David saw the big picture. He had times of despair. His despair was not about his circumstances; in those dark moments, David called out to God in prayer. When he prayed, he realized that nothing was more important than God, and his despair changed to praise. David played his lyre (a stringed instrument like a guitar) and sang songs. He wrote the songs down, which are preserved for us as the Book of Psalms.

ARE YOU IN PAIN? PSALM 69:29

"But I am in pain and distress; let your salvation protect me..."

ARE YOU AFRAID? PSALM 23

"Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil..."

ARE YOU LONELY? PSALM 25:16

"Turn to me and be gracious to me, for I am lonely and afflicted..."

Whatever you are struggling with, David did also. He begins with his feelings but always turns to God and cries out to Him. Then, his prayers turn to praise as he finds joy in his relationship with the Lord. David experienced every human emotion, yet he never lost his faith.

Psalm 4 says it beautifully. David begins with, "Answer when I call, my saving God. In my troubles, you cleared a way. Show me favor, hear my prayer." and ends with, "But you have given my heart more joy than they (King's court) when grain and wine abound. In peace, I shall both lie down and sleep, for you alone, Lord, make me secure." David learned to praise God in all things.

God meets us where we are, and when we turn to Him, He blesses us.

We have some beautiful ladies attending our monthly prayer meeting at Cambridge Springs Prison. One of the ladies, Jeannette, shared a dream she had about how important it is to God when we praise Him. Like David, I am sure that she struggles with many reasons not to praise God. Like David, God has her in exile, away from her family and home.

Jeanette has developed a deep faith and spends time reading her Bible and praying. In her dream, it was Thanksgiving in Heaven. Tables were set up in a huge banquet hall for those who would be attending. Ladies were bringing out prepared food. Then the doors opened, and angels started marching in carrying baskets of tiny flowers.

Jeanette explained that she understood that the tiny flowers in the baskets were all the praises that every person on earth had said for the past year. Every "Praise God," every "Thank you, Lord," and every praise song sung was in those baskets. As the angels walked in to put down their baskets, the tiny flowers exploded into huge blooms, filling the tables around the perimeter of the whole room with fragrance and beauty.

She explained that our Lord wanted her to know how much praise means in the Heavenly kingdom and how God's power amplifies that praise. There is no word of thanks we offer to God that He does not hear.

If David, in exile in the desert for thirteen years, and our special lady in prison for life, can take their circumstances and difficulties to God and praise Him, then what are we waiting for?

PRAISE THE LORD!!!!!!

WHAT DOES IT REALLY MEAN TO "GIVE THANKS IN ALL THINGS...IN EVERYTHING"? BY: BETHANY VERRETT

Bethany Verrett is a freelance writer who uses her passion for God, reading, and writing to glorify God. She and her husband have lived all over the country serving their Lord and Savior in ministry. She has a blog on graceandgrowing.com. (Reprinted with permission from Salem Web Network—Biblestudytools.com)

Thankfulness is a complicated state of being. When life is good, and someone is getting what they want, it is easy to achieve. When life is hard and nothing goes right, it is hard to have a spirit of gratitude. In fact, for many people, difficult times or circumstances are the easiest excuse to justify ingratitude.

The Bible has much to say about being thankful, and its message runs counter to the instincts of man. In his letter to the church at Thessalonica, the Apostle Paul wrote, *"Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you"* (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18).

Despite this seemingly difficult task for people, the Bible is full of hope, of God's unshakable promises, and the sufficient reasons needed to give thanks in all things. We can offer prayers of thanksgiving in the morning, evening, and even before starting a task.

There are many Bible verses about thanksgiving to inspire our gratitude for God and fully appreciate the meaning of the Thanksgiving holiday.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO GIVE THANKS IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES IN ALL THINGS?

As difficulties pile on, it can be easy to look around and see nothing good, sinking into despair, perpetual anger, and an inability to feel gratitude. The Bible does not pretend there is no suffering, with the Book of Ecclesiastes acknowledged there will be, *"a time to kill,,a time to break down...a time to weep...a time to mourn"* Ecclesiastes 3:3-4

To be thankful at all times, it is important to have sources of joy, something always to be grateful for, and reminders to turn to those sources of joy and good things when times are hard.

What should be the Christian's ultimate source of joy? To get through loss, suffering, and chaotic times, it would need to be something permanent and unchanging. Jesus prayed to His Father, *"But now I am coming to you, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves"* ([John 17:13](#)).

He wants those who love Him to have His joy and to be thankful for those things that bring joy.

Jesus had joy when:

A sinner repented and became saved:

[Luke 15](#)

When the Father's will is done:

[Luke 10:20-24](#)

When thinking about eternity together:

[John 16:20-22](#)

The Bible encourages believers to be thankful for:

Jesus' everlasting words:

[John 17:3](#)

God's unchanging nature:

[Psalm 102:27](#)

Salvation through Jesus' death and resurrection::

[1 Corinthians 15:57](#)

The eternal home in Heaven:

[Hebrews 12:28](#)

Ultimately, the Bible encourages believers to focus on eternal things. It is important to thank God for earthly blessings, but in order to always be thankful, there must be things to thank God for that do not rust, decay, or disappear. The way to always give thanks is to remember to thank God for His eternal gifts and promises.

When the Bible says to give thanks in all things, it asks people to thank God for blessings, both visible and invisible. When He blesses, thank Him, and thank Him for the things unseen in which Christians place their hope.

Of course, the verse does not mean that every second of everyday Christians should be muttering "Thank You God" under their breath. Instead, it encourages an attitude adjustment and a re-focusing of priorities. Thanking God for blessings through praise and prayer is the first step, and the second is by turning away from earthly wants and desires and focusing on the future promises that will matter forever, that are guaranteed by the Word of God, so there is always something to thank Him for, even if current

circumstances are difficult.

When the temptation to wallow in ingratitude begins to creep in, or when the Holy Spirit nudges with a gentle reminder that God should be thanked for His many, daily blessings, go to Him in prayer.

A Prayer to Be Thankful in All Things

Holy Father, I come to You, in all humility, to thank you for the many blessings that You bestow upon Your people. Thank you for taking care of us, and loving us. Thank you for providing exactly what we need, when we need it, according to Your wisdom and not ours. Most importantly, thank you so much for sending Your Son, Jesus Christ, to pay the price for our sins, and thank you for His resurrection from the dead. Help us to remember everything You have done, and continue to do, for us. Holy Spirit, please remind us frequently of God's mercies, and increase the fruit of gratitude in me.

Lord, there are so many difficulties in this world. We face trials, temptations, disease, chaos, uncertainty, and evil. In our human weakness, we struggle to be grateful. Give us the power, the heart, and the attitude to be thankful in all things. Even in the darkest times, You love us, You are with us, and You saved us from our sins. And for that we are grateful. Help us remember these facts and be thankful.

In Christ's name, I pray,

Amen.

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITY By: Kathy Wilcox

As a member of the team of volunteers who are committed to Prison Ministry, I am sometimes asked “Why do you go there? People in prison have put themselves there.”

While that is true, when I hear those words of condemnation, it brings back the picture in my head of the day we arrived, parked and could not walk in the front doors of the state woman’s prison at Cambridge Springs, PA as usual. A van was parked in front with armed guards surrounding it. The side door of the van opened and a woman slowly struggled to climb out. She was clothed in the orange jump suit I had seen convicts wear in TV shows; her hands shackled behind her back and connected to the shackles on her ankles. But this was not a TV show. We were witnessing the public walk of shame of another human being. Her head was down, and she slowly moved towards the building, she was walking away from her old life as a free person, and as private person.....her life forever changed.

What was her crime? We are not given the history of any of the ladies who are incarcerated, nor do we need to know. The only thing we know is that they were convicted of a crime. We understand that we are all sinners who can put on nice clothes and walk around pretending we are “nice people”. Only we and God know our sins. Those who are in prison have had their “nice person façade” ripped off; their sins revealed to their families and friends; subject to public shame.

We are not social workers; we do not offer counseling or advice. Our role is to bring them Christ’s love and his offer of a new life. Out of almost 1000 inmates about 20 to 30 come to our monthly meeting. Most of those who come have reached the place in their life journey where they realize that God is the only one who knows them, and will meet them right where they are. In our monthly meetings, we listen and pray as we hear the painful prayers of those struggling to forgive those who have hurt them, but especially the heartbreak of mothers unable to forgive themselves for not being able to care for their children. ***“If I had not gotten myself in here, my daughter would not have run away from the foster home and died, frozen, in a ditch.”*** Together we go to the Lord and pray and pray and pray. God hears and the Holy Spirit comes with forgiveness, love and peace.

Our group is called BELOVED DAUGHTERS PRAYER GROUP. The name comes from a prophesy spoken to the women as we prayed with them many years ago. ***Our Lord said “YOU are my beloved daughters”***and so they are. We bring the opportunity to learn more about Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. We have praise music, a teaching and a prayer time. Once a year we conduct a Life in the Spirit Seminar, which we present in just one day. The day includes teachings and ends with prayer for the Baptism of the Holy Spirit and the outpouring of His gifts.

If you feel that our Lord is calling you to prison ministry, please contact myself or TA. We will be happy to answer any questions and welcome you to our team.

Kathy Wilcox - 814.397.5650 | T.A. Walkiewicz- 814.833.9717

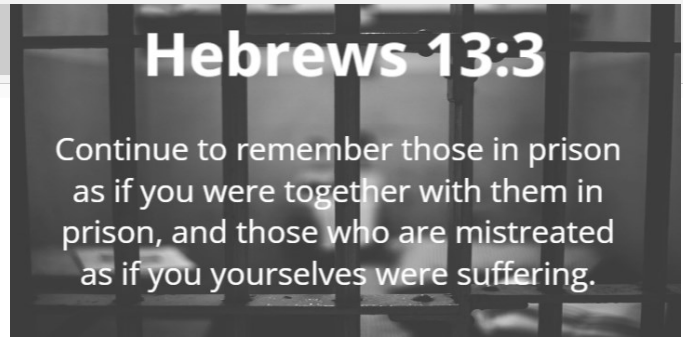
“Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise!
Give thanks to him; bless his name!” Psalm 100:4 (ESV)

“Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever.” Psalm 136:1 (ESV)

“Give thanks to the Lord, call upon his name, make known his deeds among the peoples,
proclaim that his name is exalted.” Isaiah 12:4b (ESV)

“Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, rooted and built up in him
and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.” Colossians 2:6-7 (ESV)

“Be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and
making melody to the Lord with your heart, giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in
the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Ephesians 5:18b-20 (ESV)



ADORATION HOLY HOUR

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Do whatever He tells you

FEAST OF OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE

DECEMBER 12TH 7PM-8PM

ST JOSEPH BREAD OF LIFE- 147 WEST 24TH

Fr Steve Schreiber Presiding - Contemporary Worship



Reflections of the Past

Excerpts from the memoir of Beryl Meyers - *We Walked By Faith*

"When I was a little girl, I did not know about God. They say that your father affects the way you respond to God. But my father died when I was barely six. He had been sick for two or three years before that. It's a good thing that our God is an awesome God! He let me know Him. My sisters took me to church a few times, but I don't remember anything about that, I know it was a Presbyterian church that is all. What I do remember is the church ladies who came to our door, they were talking to my mother and sisters. My sisters were in their early teens. Nobody noticed the little shy girl who was listening very intently. I learned that God loves us and if we ask for Him to forgive our sins He would. I never figured He would forgive me more than once. So naturally, I made a point of telling myself that if I am ever going to die I would ask His forgiveness. I don't know how, but the Lord worked it out with me, I know He was watching out for me. I wouldn't do anything wrong because I knew He was watching."

This was the beginning of the faith journey of an amazing woman who has agreed to let us publish excerpts from her memoir. Beryl Myers decided to write her faith journey for her family. Her health is fragile and she suffered a stroke. God and her family enabled her to complete it just a few years ago. The same childlike faith that she received at six years old stayed with her as she journeyed away from Erie and ultimately brought her back.

In her journal, she shares amazing miracles of God's protection and guidance. We will be publishing many of those stories each month including her introduction to Catholic charismatic renewal when she came back to Erie in 1970 with her husband Neal and their children. Her husband's family were attending a prayer meeting which had sprung up in Erie in 1969, just two years after the Catholic Charismatic Renewal began in Pittsburgh in 1967. Her first reaction to them was both humorous and real.

They had been welcomed back by family and were staying with them. *"All this while Neal and I were trying to avoid the prayer meeting. We had come back home to Erie in the first week of April. We had avoided getting caught up in their shenanigans, but they were always "Praise the Lord this and Praise the*

Lord that." So now we were living at Judy's house. Neal and I came up with a plan. We knew that the people from Prayer Meeting would gather at Judy's house after the meeting and talk. Our plan was to sit and be sociable but then I would say I think I hear the baby crying, and I would go upstairs and then after a few minutes Neal would excuse himself to go find me, and not come back. That got us out of there! It only took us a couple of weeks to get used to Judy and John and all their love, we realized that they weren't faking it. We also got used to those strange sounding people. They were really in love with the Lord."

It is said that Jesus is the "Hound of Heaven". He does not stop pursuing us; He stays with us and brings us into His circle of love. Beryl and Neal were soon baptized in the Holy Spirit and attending the Prayer Meetings where they had no problem with the love, and praise and miracles. Beryl shares her experiences of the early years of Charismatic Renewal in Erie. She and her son found and interviewed many people from that era.



There will be more from Beryl in the coming months!



The Catholic Charismatic Renewal traces its origins to a weekend retreat for college students at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in February 1967. At the retreat, the participants had a powerful encounter with God, one that came about after they had spent a considerable time in prayer, asking God to allow them to experience the grace of both Baptism and Confirmation. Word of this unique and transformative event spread quickly throughout the United States and abroad. Many people all over the world who began to pray for a similar experience of the Holy Spirit had the same encounter further fueling the growth of this movement.

By The Word of Their Testimony

*“But they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they did not cling to life even in the face of death.”
(Revelation 12:11)*

TESTIMONIES! PRAISE REPORTS! BLESSINGS!

We are saving this space for YOUR stories of faith, angels, miracles, answered prayers and blessings. Please email Kathy Wilcox at dlkmw2002@yahoo.com with your story or contact information; we will be happy to help write it so we can publish your “God incidents”.

A MIRACLE OF GOD’S INTERVENTION FROM BERYL MEYERS

“Judy told us a story about what happened to them and the kids. They were looking forward to a picnic out in the woods. They had a big blanket to sit on and to put their food on. They were sitting down and eating. Suddenly Judy got an awful pain in her stomach. She could hardly walk; it was so bad. John gathered up the food and the kids and got everyone in the car. Before they could drive away, a roar of motors came down the hill they had just left. It was a bunch on motorcycles revving at top speed. If they would have still been there, someone would have gotten seriously hurt. They rode back home praising God. The Lord knew.....the pain disappeared and never came back.”

GOD WANTS US TO SHARE OUR STORIES!



**Archdiocese of Philadelphia
Catholic Charismatic Renewal
Archdiocesan Leadership Day**
Saturday, November 9, 2024

9:00 AM – Mass, Praise & Worship, Eucharistic Adoration AM is Free for all Prayer Group Members
11:30 AM Lunch and Leadership Workshop Afternoon is \$35.00 for all Current and Future Leaders!

Rev. Stephen DeLacy **Maria Richardson**
Vicar for Faith Formation with Youth and Young Adults Archdiocesan Delegate CCR

Main Celebrant **Emcee**

Epiphany of Our Lord Church
3050 Walton Rd., Plymouth Meeting, PA 19462

For more information and to register go to: <https://archphilaccr.org>
Contact: Maria Carmel Richardson
Delegate, Archdiocese of Philadelphia Catholic Charismatic Renewal mrichardson@archphila.org



upcoming events

**First Saturday of the Month
Mass in honor of Our Lady**
9:00 AM at St. Gregory's, Northeast, PA
Sacred Music beginning at 8:50 AM
Music provided by:
Soloist, Jacqueline Phillips;
Celebrant: Rev. Jerry Priscaro

Son of God Prayer Group
Holy Rosary Church
2701 East Ave, Erie
Tuesday's 6:30PM

**December 12th, 2024
Adoration Holy Hour**
7:00 PM - 8:00 PM
St. Joseph Bread of Life
147 West 24th Street, Erie PA
Contemporary Worship



Jesus, Son of God, in whom the fullness of the Divinity dwells, You call all the baptized to "put out into the deep," taking the path that leads to holiness. Waken in the hearts of young people the desire to be witnesses in the world of today to the power of your love. Fill them with your Spirit of fortitude and prudence, so that they may be able to discover the full truth about themselves and their own vocation. Our Savior, sent by the Father to reveal His merciful love, give to your Church the gift of young people who are ready to put out into the deep, to be the sign among their brothers of Your presence which renews and saves. Holy Virgin, Mother of the Redeemer, sure guide on the way towards God and towards neighbor, You who pondered his word in the depth of your heart, sustain with your motherly intercession our families and our ecclesial communities, so that they may help adolescents and young people to answer generously the call of the Lord. Amen.

—John Paul II—

You Can Help Make a Difference

Word of Life is completely dependent upon your donations to spread the fire of the Holy Spirit in the Diocese of Erie. Your donation, no matter how much, makes a big difference!

Contributions can be made by check, text, Tithe.ly app, and on the website.

Checks can be made payable to:
Faith On Fire Charismatic Renewal Center
St. Mark Catholic Center
429 E. Grandview Blvd
Erie, PA 16514



Contributions via text:
Text the word "give" to our dedicated giving number: **(570) 536-9187**



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Reflections is published by:

Faith on Fire Catholic
Charismatic Renewal Center
429 E. Grandview Blvd, Erie PA 16514

Phone: (814) 636-1800
e-mail: office@faith-on-fire.org
website: www.faith-on-fire.org
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The purpose of this newsletter is to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and to provide teaching, news, and calendar of events, which help to foster Catholic Charismatic Renewal throughout the Diocese of Erie.

This newsletter may be copied to put in churches or shared with others.

CHIEF EDITOR

Jacqueline Phillips-Sabol, PhD

EDITORS

Kathy Wilcox, Loretta Laufer

FORMATTING

Loretta Laufer

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