

In Thanksgiving And Love!

The word Eucharist comes from the Greek word *Eucharistia* meaning thanksgiving. The celebration of the Eucharist is the celebration of our deep sense of gratitude to God for his everlasting love and mercy. As we are sent out "Go in peace" after the Mass, we are sent to continue to live in this deep sense of gratitude for God's actions in our lives through his ever-abiding presence. Being grateful to God is an act of faith, which reminds us constantly that God is with us. In addition, our ability to recognize and appreciate the beautiful things God has blessed us with helps us know that God has not abandoned us in the face of our challenges.

St. Paul's expression of thanksgiving to God in our second reading today (2 Timothy 1: 12-17)) is very exemplary. Paul recognized that God's grace turned him from being a persecutor to a preacher of the Gospel of salvation. Hence, in thanksgiving and love, he said, *"I am grateful to him who has strengthened me, Christ Jesus, our Lord because he considered me trustworthy in appointing me to the ministry. I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and arrogant, but I have been mercifully treated."* St. Paul's expression reminds us that thanksgiving to God begins by recognizing his benevolence in our lives.

The Gospel today (Luke 15: 1-32) has three parables: the Parable of the Lost sheep, the Parable of the Lost Coin, and the Parable of the Prodigal Son. Jesus told these parables within the context of reminding us of God's infinite and definite mercy. It is worth pointing out that each parable ends with the celebration of thanksgiving and love when we experience God's love. Significantly, in the parable of the prodigal son, the son's father expressed, *"But now we must celebrate and rejoice because your brother was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found."* This statement confirms that thanksgiving begins with recognition. Let us ask the good Lord to help us always to recognize his presence in our lives and celebrate it with thanksgiving and love. Amen.

Blessed Cyprain Iwene Tansi- Pray for us!