



FIRST-SUNDAY CONTEMPLATIVE SITTING

NOVEMBER 2021

GRATITUDE

November begins a turn toward bringing the current year to a close. In some places the autumn harvest has come to completion and many countries around the world celebrate some version of a “Thanksgiving Feast.” We take time to be grateful and appreciate the gifts we have received.

Recall somethings for which you are grateful!

Name them out loud or write them down.

When we think about the things for which we are grateful we most often recall things that brought joy, hope, or sometimes relief.

*“The essence of being grateful
is accepting what is.”*

— Br. David Steindl-Rast, OSB

Brother David invites us to be grateful for reality (what is). He invites us to let our judging mind rest and make room for curiosity.



He suggests that we might see beauty where before we saw disarray, possibility where before we met blockage.

Acceptance of that which is, challenges us to find humble satisfaction with what we have and who we are.

Consider beginning a “Gratitude Journal.”

CONTEMPLATIVE SITTING

*Mindfulness frees us of forgetfulness
and makes it possible to live fully each minute of life.*
— Thich Nhat Hanh

Contemplative sitting is an invitation to

- attend to your thoughts, feelings, and emotions with an open heart.
- offer/dedicate your everyday experiences, be they joys or sorrows, comforts or discomforts to the care and safety of others.
- gently shift patterns of behavior that do not serve you or others well.
- become more and more a presence, a being of loving kindness and compassion.
- dwell in Holy Mystery.

Mindfulness Practice

Set a time of 10, 15, 20 minutes, or more. It is helpful to have a set time for meditation. Sitting in your chair or resting in bed, come gently come into the present moment. Begin noticing any sounds around you like voices in the hall, a bell ringing. Gently hear the sounds and let them pass on by. This is Mindfulness of Sound. Then gently focus and concentrate on your breath.

- Begin with taking three breaths, just normal breaths, breathing each one in and out. Gently keeping focus on your breath; you may feel it at the tip of your nostrils or sense the movement in your chest or abdomen. If you can't feel it, place your hand on your chest or abdomen and breathe in and out.
- Each time the mind wanders, take note of where it went, and gently return to the breath. If you do this 100 times, it is just fine!

Simple Practice

- Breathing in, I calm my body, breathing out I smile,
Breathing in present moment, breathing out precious moment.
- Breathing in Holy Spirit, breathing out aah.
- Breathing in the universe, breathing out amazement.

Awareness of your mindfulness experience is key. Awareness of being distracted, or anxious, or crabby, or peaceful, or happy is key with no self-blame or judgment about your experience. Awareness is key!

My responses to this First Sunday reflection:

