

Living in Gratitude at Saint Raphael Parish

“Living in gratitude is not so easy. We don’t always feel grateful or blessed, and we often complain. However, Scripture (cf. 1 Peter 5:6-7, Colossians 3: 16-17) calls us to strive for the ideal of a grateful heart and trust in God.

St. Benedict’s Rule exemplifies this ideal for us. He exhorts his followers to live in gratitude, and to refrain from grumbling. In his Rule, Benedict uses the Latin term for ‘murmuring’ - what we would call grumbling. He is adamant that grumbling is not to be tolerated, not only because it indicates a lack of gratitude and trust within the individual monk’s (person’s) heart, but because it can be so damaging to those around us.

At its root, chronic grumbling is a lack of faith in God’s provident care, it is prideful frustration that seeps into our hearts when things don’t go our way, or we don’t get what we want. It is a refusal to bow under the mighty hand of God, trusting that everything will work out, and that things are often better than acknowledged. St. Benedict urges us to live in gratitude each moment, if for nothing else than for the simple fact that we are God’s children, created and chosen, redeemed by Christ, and promised eternal life.

If we truly consider those essentials, nothing else matters, and we can live in gratitude all our days.” (Living in Gratitude: Reflecting on Benedict’s Caution Against Grumbling by Br. Francis, Saint Meinrad Archabbey)

“Do not grumble or speak ill of others. Place your hope in God alone.”
~ Rule of St. Benedict, Ch 4:39-41