

A Month for Giving Thanks

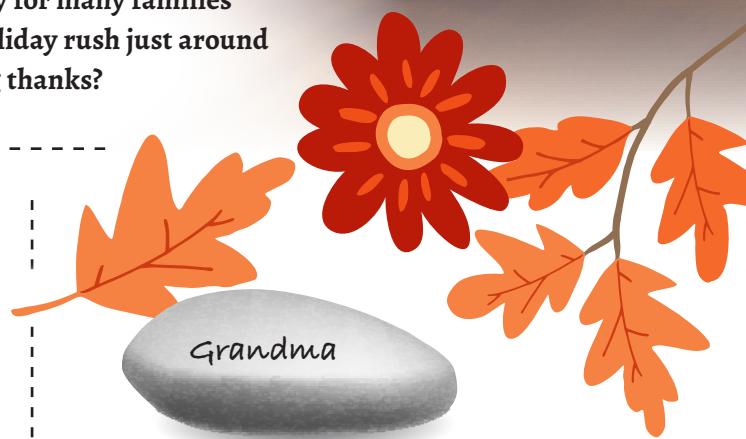
OSV Staff

The month of November is filled with family gatherings and autumn activities. In the Church, this month is dedicated to the holy souls as we remember and give thanks for all believers who have gone before us. Thanksgiving is a special holiday for many families because it is centered on gratitude rather than gift giving. With the holiday rush just around the corner, why not spend the month of November giving thanks?

The Gift of Service

Thank you, God,
for the people in our
community.
Help us to love and serve
our neighbor
in big ways and small.
Amen.

Unexpected Thanks: This week, go out of your way to say “thank you” to service providers, including waitresses, hairdressers, grocery-store clerks, bank tellers, garbage workers, postal-service employees — the list goes on. Write a short note of thanks or greet your service providers in person. While we’re often quick to complain when something goes wrong, we rarely thank the people who make our daily lives run smoothly.



Family Activity: Gather brightly colored leaves, acorns and mums for an autumn centerpiece. Find smooth white or gray rocks and paint the names of your loved ones w have died on them and include them in the center of your table. You have just created a memorial for each time you share a family meal.

The Gift of Faith

Thank you, God,
for our faith.
Help us to listen to your
Word and follow Jesus
each and every day.
Amen.

Unexpected Thanks: Give thanks to God for some of life’s frustrations. Challenges offer us the chance to grow and become more compassionate toward other people. As Christians, we believe that while life isn’t always easy, God’s promise is to be present with us along the way. Thank God for his presence in your life, whatever your struggles may be.



Family Activity: Decorate a gratitude plate. Purchase a white plate (\$1 at dollar stores) and a Vitrea glass marker. Write everything your family is thankful for (or perhaps one of the prayers on this page) and bake in the oven at 300 degrees for 40 minutes. Hang it on your wall for this month and beyond.

The Gift of Family

Thank you, God,
for family and friends.
We remember our loved
ones who have died and
pray they are at peace in
your loving arms.
Amen.

Unexpected Thanks: Instead of focusing on what we have been given this Thanksgiving, focus on the eternal Giver — God our Father. Go to Mass as a family on Thanksgiving morning. Thank God for giving us every good gift and ask for a strong faith so we might never doubt God’s providence.



Family Activity: Instead of a tablecloth, cover your table(s) with white butcher-block paper. Set crayons and colored pencils at each place setting and ask guests to write what they are thankful for about the person(s) seated next to them. Cut the paper into sections and send them home with your guests as a remembrance of the day.