

# GENUFLECTOR CATHOLIC

*The Magazine*

Then the LORD  
turned to him  
and said,  
"Go with  
the strength  
you have,  
and rescue  
Israel from  
the Midianites.  
I am  
sending you!"  
Judges 6:12-14

THANKSGIVING | 2023  
GOD WE PRAISE YOU,  
GOD WE BLESS YOU





# CONTENTS

GIVING THANKS FOR ANOTHER YEAR	3
THANKSGIVING PRAYER	3
LET CHRIST KNOW YOU	5
PREPARE THE WAY ADVENT CHALLENGE	8
SPONSORS	9

## A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Thank you for reading another issue of the Genuflector magazine. This one is a special edition for Thanksgiving! From everyone at Genuflector Catholic we wish you and all your loved ones a happy Thanksgiving, which is at heart, a day of unity and thanksgiving towards God.

Just an update on what is going on with the magazine:

- Please join us for our Advent challenge: prepare the way (see page 8 and our website).
- We will be launching a series of Bible Studies very shortly! Please be sure to check our website for updates.
- Please consider sponsoring with us or donating so that we can continue these ministries. Please email [thegenuflectermagazine@gmail.com](mailto:thegenuflectermagazine@gmail.com) if interested.
- Another way you can support us is by email a person/intention you would like to be included in the back of the magazine. It is \$20 per intention.



# Giving Thanks for Another Year

One of my favorite mass hymns is the shortest of all, it is called Doxology. The lyrics go “Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all creatures here below; Praise Him above, ye heav'nly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.” It is short and to the point: everything good that we have, everything that we morally cherish in this world, is from God, everything. As St. Thomas Aquinas explains, God is goodness, expanding off of Aristotle’s “good is what we all desire.” Aquinas tells us that God is the “supreme good,” meaning nothing greater than God can be imagined, and therefore, nothing as good as God can be imagined. Because God is the supreme good, all good things flow from him, since to use Aquinas’ theological proofs for God’s existence, God is the first cause of everything, the first cause in the existence of the casual chain.

We live in a time when there is a lot of good, but there is also clearly, a lot of evil. Just to name some of the general blessings we have received in life is our faith, our families, our friends, the Church. Everyone has their own blessings they have received in life, including their jobs, their homes, their kids, and more. God has blessed many of us so many times, and we have to remember that every time we experience a great thing in life, it comes and flows from God, and we should praise and bless him for what he has given us.

But many will not focus on the good things God has blessed us and will question one of the biggest questions throughout the history of Christianity and Judaism: why does God allow evil? Why would an all loving God allow children to get cancer or for a single mom of four die from violence? These are clearly not good things and although we shouldn’t dwell on the bad things in our life, it is a fair question and it often makes it hard for people to be faithful and thankful towards God and Our Lord, Jesus Christ.

The first thing that must be known is that God didn’t create evil. Evil isn’t a substance, as St. Augustine tells us, meaning it is isn’t a being. God creates beings and substances, such as humans, plants, oxygen, rocks, etc.. Evil is a state, not a substance, and it is often defined as the lack or the privation of the good. Meaning evil is the status of being in the absence of the good. So that first must be understood that God didn’t create it.



The question then becomes, why does God allow evil. And although we have a response, and although it is true and logical, we will never fully understand things about God during our time on this earth, including why he allows evil and what the trinity is. But we can understand in some ways why God allows evil. Firstly, we need to understand that God loves us infinitely and He loves us more than anything, and He desires that we love Him, know Him, and want to desire Him. For us to love him, since true love must be free and complete, we must have free will, so when God created man, he gave us free will so that can truly choose to love him. But since we have free will, we have the option to choose against him, which what happened at the fall of humanity. When man chose to sin against God, falling into the snake's temptations, they chose against love and freedom, and evil entered the world, meaning the state of being in the absence of the good came to be. And therefore God allows humanity to commit evils because it is the only way freedom and love can truly exist. What about the physical evils, some may ask, since free will only explains why humans themselves commit evils, but what about the earthquakes, hurricanes, or volcanic eruptions that occur. This also comes from the free will. When humanity sinned in the beginning, it ruptured our relationship with God, and because the relationship between us, God, and nature are all connected, a rupturing of our relationship with God also ruptured our relationship with the natural world, allowing physical evil to enter, meaning the absence of goodness to enter nature. We also have to remember that we are mere humans, and have no where near the amount of wisdom that God has. And because of this we have to think that the evils that exist and the reason why God would allow would make sense from God's perspective, because He has the fullness of goodness and wisdom, and can see creation from above and a different perspective.

So on this Thanksgiving in 2023, let us praise God from whom all of our blessings truly flow and trust in his wisdom and knowledge that everything that happens, happens because God loves us and has complete wisdom.

*Happy Thanksgiving from Geneflector Catholic!*

## **Thanksgiving Prayer**

O Gracious God, we give You thanks for Your overflowing generosity to us. Thank You for the blessings of the food we eat and especially for this feast today. Thank You for our home and family and friends, especially for the presence of those gathered here. Thank You for our health, our work and our play. Please send help to those who are hungry, alone, sick, and suffering war and violence. Open our hearts to Your love. We ask Your blessing through Christ, Your Son, Amen.

*From Celebrating Faith: Year-round Activities for Catholic Families by Mary Cronk Farrell*



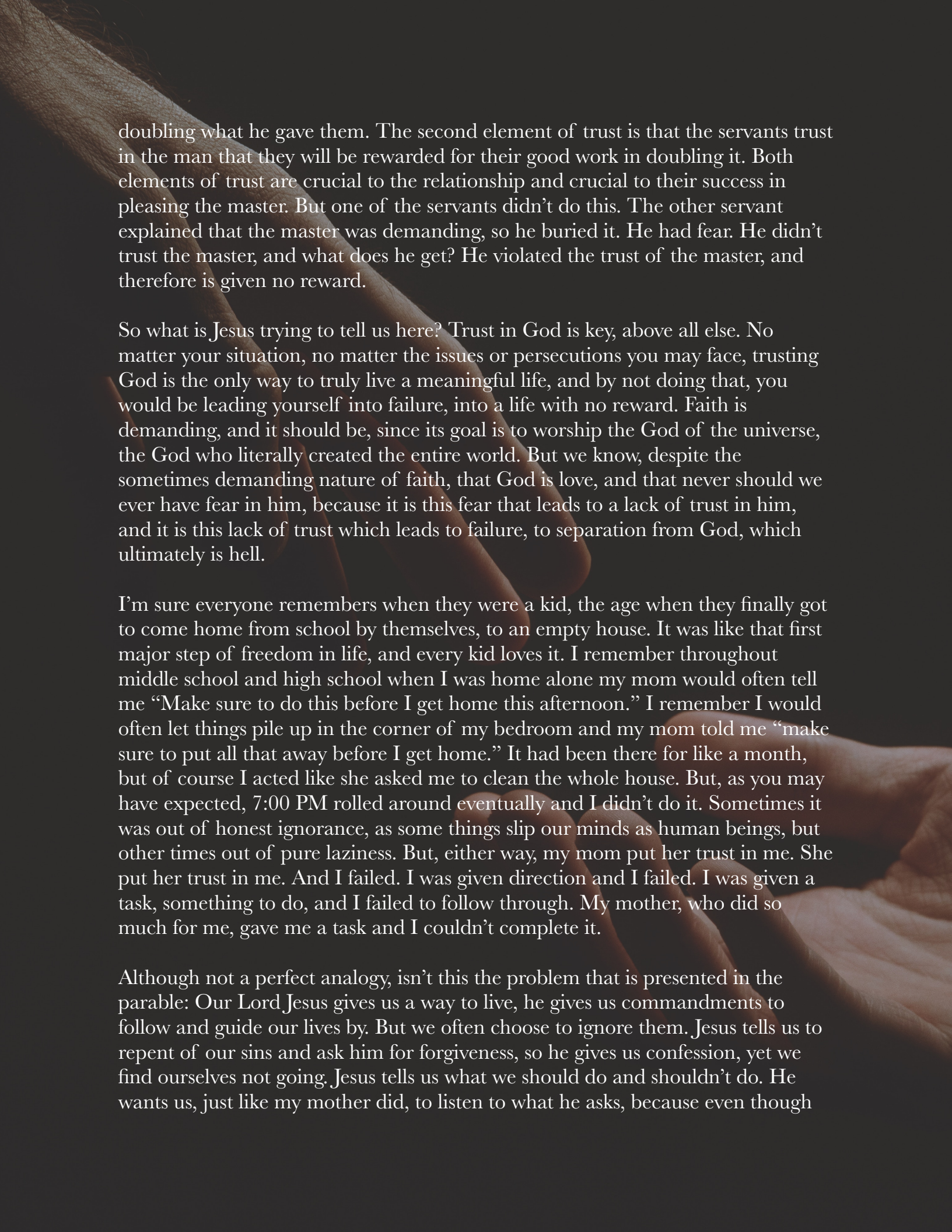
# Let Christ Know You

*The following is a reflection on Matthew 25:14-30.*

I was recently on instagram and saw these really awesome photos of Catholic chaplains saying mass during WW2 for the soldiers. There are a few books on the topic, and one of them is called “Soldiers of a Different Cloth: Notre Dame Chaplains in World War II.” It is currently on my reading list, hoping to start it before Christmas comes, but I did some research before going in to buy it and the story of these chaplains is just insane. An article in the Arlington Catholic Herald talks about the book and they write “They [the Catholic Chaplains] marched alongside the troops in the Bataan Death March, parachuted with the 101st Airborne into Normandy on D-Day, and endured Belgium’s freezing cold in the Battle of the Bulge. Those captured alongside the young men they served were also imprisoned in hellish conditions in Germany and Japan.” But they didn’t just do all that. They didn’t just fight in the war. They also prayed over the mounds of dead, they heard confessions and said mass in the small breaks in battle, and ran in front of gun fire to bless the dead that had just died. One such chaplain, Fr. Barry followed his soldiers into battle and as the chaplain, “he carried only his khaki uniform, his stole, and his prayer book.” He dodged bullets to give last confessions to Catholics and prayers to non-Catholics, as Arlington Catholic Herald explains. These chaplains were amazing, honorable, and valor filled men. And they still are, as there many priests, although a shortage, serving as Chaplains. They are entrusted by the Catholics in their unit to bring the faith throughout the difficult moments, and be there for the absolute worst times. Trust is key here. The chaplains have their trust, their faith in God that he will guide their ministry, protect them in battle, and help them to perform the sacraments amongst despair and battle. But then there is also an element of trust between the soldiers and the chaplain. The Catholics of the unit are trusting that the chaplain will be there with them, that the chaplain will be at their side, armed with the power of God, their stole, and their prayers.

Isn’t that what our Lord is talking about in this parable. Jesus gives us this story about Talents, essentially currency. This man gives her servants talents and two of them take what he gave them and do good with them, essentially they gave him a return on investment. One of them is given 5 talents and returns 10, the other is given 2 and returns 4. They give back to this man on the journey what he is owed and more. There are two points of trust here. The first is that the man going on a journey trusts in his servants to take his money and to do good with it, such as by






doubling what he gave them. The second element of trust is that the servants trust in the man that they will be rewarded for their good work in doubling it. Both elements of trust are crucial to the relationship and crucial to their success in pleasing the master. But one of the servants didn't do this. The other servant explained that the master was demanding, so he buried it. He had fear. He didn't trust the master, and what does he get? He violated the trust of the master, and therefore is given no reward.

So what is Jesus trying to tell us here? Trust in God is key, above all else. No matter your situation, no matter the issues or persecutions you may face, trusting God is the only way to truly live a meaningful life, and by not doing that, you would be leading yourself into failure, into a life with no reward. Faith is demanding, and it should be, since its goal is to worship the God of the universe, the God who literally created the entire world. But we know, despite the sometimes demanding nature of faith, that God is love, and that never should we ever have fear in him, because it is this fear that leads to a lack of trust in him, and it is this lack of trust which leads to failure, to separation from God, which ultimately is hell.

I'm sure everyone remembers when they were a kid, the age when they finally got to come home from school by themselves, to an empty house. It was like that first major step of freedom in life, and every kid loves it. I remember throughout middle school and high school when I was home alone my mom would often tell me "Make sure to do this before I get home this afternoon." I remember I would often let things pile up in the corner of my bedroom and my mom told me "make sure to put all that away before I get home." It had been there for like a month, but of course I acted like she asked me to clean the whole house. But, as you may have expected, 7:00 PM rolled around eventually and I didn't do it. Sometimes it was out of honest ignorance, as some things slip our minds as human beings, but other times out of pure laziness. But, either way, my mom put her trust in me. She put her trust in me. And I failed. I was given direction and I failed. I was given a task, something to do, and I failed to follow through. My mother, who did so much for me, gave me a task and I couldn't complete it.

Although not a perfect analogy, isn't this the problem that is presented in the parable: Our Lord Jesus gives us a way to live, he gives us commandments to follow and guide our lives by. But we often choose to ignore them. Jesus tells us to repent of our sins and ask him for forgiveness, so he gives us confession, yet we find ourselves not going. Jesus tells us what we should do and shouldn't do. He wants us, just like my mother did, to listen to what he asks, because even though





we sometimes don't understand it, it is for our own good. Above all, Jesus says we should love the Lord our God with all our heart, mind, and being, essentially, we must trust in the Lord above all else. And it is when we don't trust in God that things fall apart, like if the chaplains stopped trusting in God, and the soldiers stopped trusting in them. The whole system would fall apart.

As we come to the end of our liturgical year, our Lord, Jesus Christ, gives us information on what the Church calls the Last Four Things. That is Death, Judgement, Heaven, and Hell. And it isn't always a pretty picture. Last week we heard our Lord explain to us what we need to be ready. We need our Lord to be our vision, as I discussed last week, so that we can live a life in which we are worthy to return to him. The Lord tells us "Amen, I say to you, I do not know you. Therefore, stay awake, for you know neither the day nor the hour." Now this week we get a similar, but different message. The Lord elaborates more this week on what it means to be ready for when the unexpected coming our Lord is, essentially when we come before the Lord, which is death, judgment, heaven, and hell. And essentially Jesus tells us that to be ready, to be prepared for his coming, is to trust in God above all else, to put God first and trust in his mercy. So we are to take the faith and grace we have been given, accept it and multiply it. How do we do this? By being, as St. John Paul II says, an Easter people. We need to make known the Resurrection of Jesus Christ to the world. We need to bring our faith to the world through our actions, through our temperance, and through our love. We need to show the world that we trust the father above all else, and by doing so, we definitely multiply what the Lord has given us. But if we keep our faith to ourselves, pick and choose what we want to believe, and keep the truth of reality as a subjective belief, then we bury what the Lord has given us, and He will not know us. If we trust in God above all else, and show it to the world, just like the Chaplains did, Jesus will confess to the father that he knows us. Jesus tells us in Matthew 10:32, "Everyone who acknowledges me before others I will acknowledge before my heavenly Father. But whoever denies me before others, I will deny before my heavenly Father." We need to live our lives like the chaplains, and not like childhood me, and hopefully that was obvious. The chaplains showed the world by their absolute value and bravery they trusted in the Lord above all else, they trusted he would take care of them, and so they did his work on earth, giving example to the other soldiers in their units.

We have and will continue many battles in our lives where we have to choose between trusting in God and trusting in empty promises and false guarantees. Even Jesus had the choice. Jesus feared the suffering and had agony over it, but he trusted in the Father, he trusted in himself, and he knew, as God, that he would



have to do this to save what he loves most. The chaplains had a literal battle and they still chose to trust in God, as they dodged bullets to bring the sacraments.

Christ only knows us if we allow others to know him.

*Let Christ Know You.*

# Advent 2023 Challenge:

## *Prepare the Way* **ADVENT 2023 CHALLENGE** *with Genuflector Catholic*

Let Us Get Closer to Christ Together

### **CHALLENGE:**

1. Choose at least one day per week to attend daily mass.
2. Attend Friday Evening Christ every week @ St. Mary's (7:00 PM)
3. Go to Confession at least twice before Christmas
4. Pray the Divine Office (See Our Website For Instructions & Tips)
5. Read the Daily Gospel (See USCCB)
6. Pray the Rosary with us (See Our Website for Instructions & Tips)
7. Make sure to do your Friday penance!

See our website for more information on how to complete this prayerful challenge with us via the page: [Advent Challenge](#).

We Hope Through Our United Prayer We Can Become  
Closer to Christ!



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## Prayer Intentions:

The Middle East, War, and Conflict | The Souls of All the Departed  
All Victims to Violence & War | Parents | Grandparents  
The Pope & All Clergy | For All Those Discerning the Priesthood

*Your intention can be here. Email [thegenuflectermagazine@gmail.com](mailto:thegenuflectermagazine@gmail.com)!*