

# Connecting New

November, 2016

Gratitude is both the path and the fruit of the spiritual journey. Practices such as making a daily gratitude list, giving thanks before meals and participating in worship services are examples. Pausing to become aware of all the gifts we have received can lead us to become more grateful, gifts such as being created in the first place, having people in our lives who love us and whom we love, the ability to see, to think, to remember, the gift of education, the gift of being invited by God to co-create the world as it unfolds, and the list goes on.

As wisdom blossoms within us, we come to appreciate that all is gift, that the sum of our experiences has formed us to be the people we are today. We can see that our woundedness serves as the ground for empathy and compassion, and that the challenges in our lives have revealed our strength. We can come to see that everything belongs and that everyday life is truly sacred.

So this month I invite you to join with me in the practice and fruit of gratitude, and offer a poem accordingly.

Messy

Holiness is changing the poopy diaper,  
cleaning up the dog vomit,  
disposing of the dead bird waiting in the yard,  
the encounter with the person we wish to avoid.

Life, real life, is too earthy to be clean  
and too creative to be orderly.

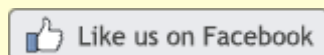
Praise God for the delays and disruptions,  
for stepping in gum,  
for the spot on my dress.

Thank God for the beauty in chaos,  
for the unpredictable expressions of love,  
for the moments of graced surprise.

Amen to this blessed, messy life!

May we all come to enter more deeply into gratitude, including an awareness of how grateful God is for us.

Peace and Blessings,  
Clarence



Clarence Heller is a spiritual director, poet, and dreamer whose writing and paintings are inspired through prayerful reflection.

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