

Gratitude Walk in Nature

***Note: Before your 'Gratitude Walk', please read the following excerpt from**

The Promise of Immortality, by Swami Kriyananda

Everything should be loved for God's sake – nothing for its own sake. This was the message conveyed by St. Francis of Assisi in his wonderful "Canticle of the Creatures", a hymn of thanksgiving to God for His love in creating "brother Sun and sister Moon". Francis's canticle was written not, as many believe, in praise of God's creation itself, but in joyous love for its all beneficent Creator. For while it is good to find inspiration in Nature's beauty, it is best if that beauty inspires us to love God all the more fervently.

We honor God when we love all things in His name. We honor Him every time we find divine inspiration in a sunset; energy and joy in a burst of sunlight through the trees; heavenly music in the songs of birds; and inner freedom in every gust of wind. Everything becomes more wonderful when we perceive life's inner secret: that at the heart of everything is Love Itself.

It helps also to look beyond things that only inspire us aesthetically. For God sends messages in many forms.

Consider the rocks: Are they not, in their massiveness and immobility, divine lessons in steadfastness? Consider the bees: Don't they teach us, wordlessly, to sip only sweetness from life, and to turn aside from all anger and bitterness? Consider the clouds: Isn't their message one of aloofness from petty daily preoccupations, and of impartial service to all, as they themselves render when they send nourishing rain?

Gratitude Walk in Nature Exercise

Begin with a prayer or declare your intention to cultivate gratitude.

Walk slowly, aware of your surroundings.

Stop every 5 minutes or so. Look around and focus on one thing in nature only. How does this inspire you towards love and gratitude? Silently express your gratitude and then offer it up to God.

Try to experience gratitude from this heightened awareness within. Proceed through your walk, stopping every 5 minutes or so.

Make notes when finished. Were there metaphors or things you witnessed in nature that can help to remind you of gratitude?

Take note and contemplate...

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

“Gratitude will make the world come alive. Anything in nature will speak to you if you love it enough.” —George Washington Carver