

Five ways of sustaining faith in difficult times - gratitude

Ronald Rolheiser says that the only heart that can transform the world is the grateful heart. Why? I think it is because the world does not understand gratitude. The grateful heart is the heart that knows the very reason for its existence lies in the love of another and the world does not any longer understand that we owe our very existence to another. Our gratitude can remind others of the presence of God. It maybe reminds others that only in God is peace and happiness to be found much needed in these troubled and difficult times.

What are we to be grateful for? Maybe it's the gift of life, the gift of the world, the gift of energy, sexuality, people. There is so much to be thankful for if we take time to reflect on our lives. A spirit of gratitude is an alternative to all negativity. It's an alternative to hatred and suspicion, judgement and condemnation. It's not so much an emotion as a decision to view the world in a particular way. It's to face the world with a heart that's open rather than a heart which is suspicious or presumes badness rather than goodness. It's a way of embracing the world rather than separating oneself from it.

In the grateful heart there is room for acceptance understanding compassion and love. It is those things that transform our beautiful broken world and the key to it all is gratitude.

- **When you wake, choose five things to be grateful for.**
- **Spend a few moments thanking God for all you are given.**
- **Cultivate gratitude each day for the food you eat.**
- **Pray that God changes your heart to a grateful heart.**