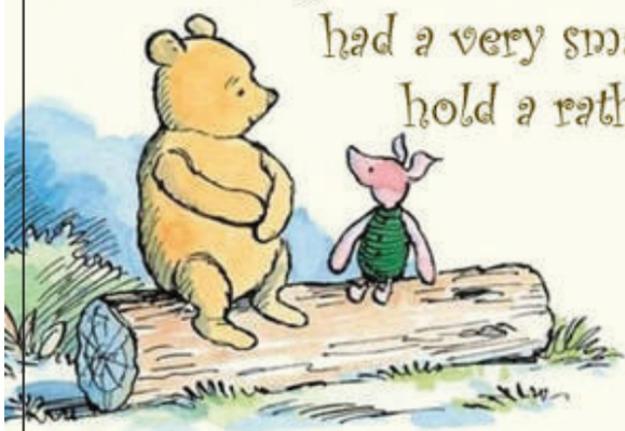


Piglet noticed that even though he had a very small heart, it could hold a rather large amount of Gratitude.

A.A. Milne



## Sunday Reflection With Fr. Rafal

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Last Sunday we heard about the devil tempting Jesus. You might remember the etymology of the word "devil." It comes from the Greek *diabolein*: to tear apart, to divide, to scatter.

The devil works on us to tear us apart inside, to make us lose focus and become scattered, distracted. Jesus on the other hand wants to bring us back together, to regain focus, to serve God alone.

This Sunday we see one of the most powerful means to regain focus, namely gratitude. Peter says, "It is good we are here." He's referring to Jesus' transfiguration and the appearance of Moses and Elijah.

A person can have less and still experience happiness - if he has gratitude. A person who fasts learns gratitude for simple food. During Lent we also "fast" from the Gloria, Alleluia and flowers in the sanctuary - so we can have greater appreciation when Easter arrives.

Gratitude has power. We can see it in the saint we honor this week on March 17. When Patrick was a youth, Irish pirates kidnapped him and sold him into slavery. After six years he made a harrowing escape. Patrick could have said, "I will never go back to that island." Or "I'll get my revenge." Instead, he saw his misfortune as part of God's providence. He worked, studied and became a priest, then returned to Ireland. He brought those rugged people to Christ.

We may not become great missionaries but like St. Patrick; we can see even our misfortunes as part of God's providence. It all begins with gratitude.

St. Paul gives a great motive for gratitude. He says that we possess dual citizenship. We belong to our country and in Jesus we have citizenship in heaven. I'm grateful to belong to this country. In spite of our nation's problems and sins, people envy us: our freedom, opportunities and abundance. In comparison with other nations, children born here have won the lottery. They can have a beautiful future. We should be grateful for our country. At the same time our citizenship here is small potatoes compared with citizenship in heaven - in Christ.

Today we get a small glimpse of Jesus' reality. With Peter, James and John we see some of his glory. And with Peter we can say, "It is good we are here." Today God calls us to gratitude: for small and large gifts like family and country and even for misfortunes which God allows for a purpose. Above all we are grateful for Jesus who shares his glory with us. "It is good we are here."

Have a Blessed Second Week of Lent 2022!

*Rev. Rafal Ligenza*

Pastor — St. Joseph Parish