

POSITIVE THINKING

Many studies have been done in the field of science and health showing the connection between our mental or spiritual health and our physical health. They continue to find that a person with a positive outlook tends to heal faster from injuries, fight off diseases more easily, and is more likely to follow a healthy lifestyle. Indeed, what we think or how we think, can actually help determine who we are or how we look at our world.

Susan Taylor states, “Thoughts are energy, and you can make your world or break your world by thinking.” The way we look at a situation we’re in determines the way we deal with it. If we believe life is a series of opportunities, we recover more quickly from disappointments and accept life with open arms. If we think that life is a series of disasters waiting to happen, life can get the better of us, causing us to miss out on much of what is good.

“What you are, the world around you will be. But what you think, is what you are. Sr. Joan Chittister

Perhaps now, more than ever, our world needs optimists, dreamers, and those who speak with kindness and compassion. Can we disagree without anger? Listen without judgment? Stop gossip by seeing and speaking the positive? Can we awaken each day and pray to be open to the goodness we see or to be the goodness we don’t see? It is said our view of the world around us, our view of others, and our view of ourselves are equal to our view of God. Wow! That means if we see God as merciful, compassionate, loving and divine goodness; we are to strive to see and continue to bring into reality these same attributes. We are, after all, made in the image and likeness of God. Let’s not settle for anything less!

“There’s not a thing in the world that can’t be thought about differently. There’s not a thing in the world that can’t give us another way of looking at the world if we are only open to it.”

For the next month, we invite you to focus on prayerfulness – to pray for the virtue for yourself, to thank God for the gift, and to think of those you know who are examples of this virtue. We encourage you to call or write them, telling them you see the virtue of positive thinking in them. For example:

- Persons who see God as the strength in their suffering instead of the source.
- Those who see the world and any given situation as larger than themselves.
- Parents who focus on their children’s strengths instead of worrying about what they don’t do well.
- Someone who sees the positive side of a situation, or who refuses to jump to conclusions.
- Those who find the good in others and speak it.

Prayer for the Virtue of Positive Thinking

Loving God, thank you for giving me the gift of your Son who has shown me the path to you. I ask for the virtue of positive thinking. Help me to indeed put on the heart and mind of Christ so that I may see and respond to all things as he would. Heal me from my impulse to jump to conclusions. Open my mind to think the best of others first, and to see all situations as opportunities for growth rather than obstacles in life or problems to be solved. May my smile be contagious, my laughter deep, and my attitude toward life a sign of your presence within me. May my life in its entirety mirror your love for our world. I ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord, who teaches us that new life is always within our reach. Amen.