

## JUNE MONTHLY THEME: CELEBRATING BLESSINGS

As a friend once said, “I guess after plan A fails, I need to remember there's still a whole alphabet out there.” Who of us doesn't need a little help remembering that? Especially after enduring Covid for so long. And the ongoing reckoning with racism. And the world's inability to deal with climate change. And political division. You get the point. It's easy to feel demoralized, daunted and defeated these days. With so many things going wrong, it's easy to overlook the many things going right.

Pointing to the blessings in life are a way to widen our view. And it's not just about widening our view to see the gifts and blessings themselves; it's about widening our understanding of life. Pointing to blessings repairs our relationship with life, allowing us to see it as generous instead of indifferent or threatening. And that's no small thing. Because when the world seems stingy with us, we start getting stingy with others. In contrast, those who feel blessed have little trouble passing blessings on. Life spills into us and we spill into others.

And in that overflow, it does indeed get a whole lot easier to notice that there is, most certainly, a whole alphabet out there.

### **Which question is calling to you? Where is it leading you?**

1. When in your life have you most felt like you were a blessing?
2. What summer in your life contained the most blessings? Is there any part of you that wants to recreate or re-experience some of those blessings this summer?
3. What role has the blessing of friendship played in your life?
4. What blessing did the religion of your childhood leave you?
5. Has a loss, obligation, or burden ever surprised you with a blessing?
6. How would you complete the sentence: “I've been blessed with \_\_\_\_\_.”?

### **Wise Words:**

#### **Blessing When the World is Ending**

Jan Richardson

...there is...nothing that cries out more  
for a blessing  
than when a world  
is falling apart.  
This blessing  
will not fix you  
will not mend you  
will not give you  
false comfort...  
It will simply  
sit itself beside you  
among the shards  
and gently turn your face  
toward the direction  
from which the light  
will come...

Full piece at  
<https://paintedprayerbook.com/2016/07/18/blessing-when-the-world-is-ending/>

#### **A Franciscan Benediction**

May God bless us with discomfort

At easy answers, half-truths, and superficial relationships  
So that we may live from deep within our hearts.

May God bless us with anger

At injustice, oppression, and exploitation of God's creations  
So that we may work for justice, freedom, and peace.

May God bless us with tears

To shed for those who suffer pain, rejection, hunger, and war,  
So that we may reach out our hands to comfort them and  
To turn their pain into joy.

And may God bless us with just enough foolishness

To believe that we can make a difference in the world,  
So that we can do what others claim cannot be done:

To bring justice and kindness to all our children and all our  
neighbors who are poor.