

## (The) Thankless

### *Or You Could Thank Them*

There are people, who do so many things for us – the ‘thankless’ jobs. Yet we either remain unaware, or far worse, are critical of their service to us and others. Just one example are folks cleaning our churches, many of them volunteers. Even if paid, it is not a living wage. They do this, clean the house of the Lord, because they are happy to be of service, to Him and to the members of their church. I’ve seen several ‘take ownership’ of ‘their’ church. And I’ve heard ‘complaints’ about the job they do. Sigh.

The everywoman and the everyman.

Like those who clean the aisles at the stores where we buy things necessary to sustain life - food at grocery stores, since many of us no longer grow our own food, or know how. These ‘cleaners’ work along side people who stock the shelves, which became startling bare once Covid hit and never recovered. This, of course, led to hearing many conversations between customers and the shelf stockers. The people who maintain grocery store stock take a lot of verbal abuse when the ‘customer’ cannot get what he or she wants. Dour. Seems like there is a lot of that going around. Shoppers are dour because they can’t get what they ‘want’ – versus what they need. Human beings behind cash registers assume the ‘dour’ look just to fit in.

Then there is the person that says, “Thank you. Thank you for your help”. Or the woman or guy that cracks jokes with those being of service to others, making them laugh, perhaps one of the few times they get to do so in an eight, ten or twelve hour day.

I believe we used to call service work menial jobs. Many of us believed that kind of work was ‘beneath’ us. Therefore, so were our brothers and sisters doing the work. We might think we are ‘glad we are not like that’, having to do ‘that’ kind of work! Of the many wrongs needing to be righted, a great place to start would be to talk with and appreciate what the people do for us at gas stations, fast food restaurants or any restaurant for that matter, in fact all stores large and small. Listen to them tell their tale, often one of misfortune and deeply personal. Empathize with them. Speak with them as you are, equal in the Eyes of the One Who created you in His Image and Likeness. Listen to **their** story.

Most of all be kind.

It is so simple for us to change the world one conversation at a time. Those in ‘service’ industries work hard. Sharing their experiences with a sympathetic open mindset can do wonders. What you do may not know is that the person behind you in line is also ‘listening in’. So it’s not just our helper that benefits, it’s at least one more. Actions do speak louder than words. One of my favorite kind of moments, is when I follow behind someone who exudes negativity. When it is my turn and I say hello and ask how they are doing, the person checking my items may sigh or make a comment about what just happened to them. I listen, agree, and then crack some off handed joke, seeking to bring their smile back.

It is hard not to notice the change in people since that little white death star (Covid) escaped and infected the world. Many became kinder. Though there are still exceptions like folks who come up on vacation expecting the world to bow at their feet. You know, the ones that closed restaurants because the wait staff and management could not take any more rudeness. Wow! A newspaper headline tells it like it is! *Restaurant closes due to rowdy customers. Wait staff says No More!* Be rude and no service and the doors are locked! More important than no shoes no shirt no service is... no more rudeness.

And before we become judges of those we deem ‘rude’, maybe something is going on in their life that embittered them. One never knows what happened to a person before you witnessed one of their ‘bad’ moments. Take a shot, hear their story!

A wise woman once told her children the most important thing to look for in a potential lifelong mate is to watch how they treat other people; the waiter, the gate agent, the checkout man or lady, the one sweeping the floor, and/or just another person who looks like they need some help. Check to see if they have the good Samaritan in them.

Never ever forget to say **thank you** to everyone who helps you with anything! Please?

Don’t let them be thankless.