SOULITUDE: Gratitude

Philippians 4:6-8 'Don't be pulled in different directions or worried about a thing. Be saturated in prayer throughout each day, offering your faith-filled requests before God with overflowing gratitude. Tell him every detail of your life, then God's wonderful peace transcending human understanding, will guard your heart and mind through Jesus Christ. Keep your thoughts continually fixed on all that is authentic and real, honorable and admirable, beautiful and respectful, pure and holy, merciful and kind. And fasten your thoughts on every glorious work of God, praising him always.' (TPT)

Everyday, I get the greatest privilege. I get to serve others who are less fortunate than me. Or who are where I once was. It is a true gift to me that I get to pour out on to other people the kindness and compassion and grace, even a portion of which Christ has shown me.

I remember Thanksgiving holidays apart from my children. How pointless they seemed. How I would rummage deep down inside myself for every ounce of cheer I could muster so they would not hear the aloneness and hopelessness I tried to camouflage by my false bravado. If you are a single parent and you split holidays, you probably know what I mean. I also remember when the pretense became too much, and the coward that I was, succumbed to anything else that might numb the pain and forlorn apathy to which I had not been able to grow accustomed. I would stash my lack of gratitude and soulitude and my agony in the bottom of any bottle I might discover that rendered me pain-free for a day. Or a year.

I am so indulged by a gracious Father Who saw me needy and found me broken enough to intervene. He chose me to take my message to share with others who also have spent all they had on reckless living, who squandered what the Father gave, who have wandered in wildernesses far longer than necessary. So that others might reap the harvest of a second chance and gather the spoils of His goodness and kindness from my testimony. I am beyond humbled and filled with gratitude and praise that He took this beggar wrapped in filthy rags and an empty soul to use for His glory and others' good.

So, this Thanksgiving if you find yourself void of any hope, and bankrupt of joy, try—just try—to make a sacrifice of gratitude; put on a garment of praise, and see if the One Who bore it all, Who buried our despair and despondency In the nail prints, might just be worthy of our acknowledgment and thanks.

Isaiah 26:3, 'You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You.' (NKJV)