

relentlessly pursuing me and choosing to cancel my sins. Thank you for your gift of forgiveness, abundant life, and eternal treasure and that all I need to do is accept your gifts and place my faith in your saving grace. Amen

Lori Campbell

Day 5: Wow Moments

“Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.” Luke 12:27 (ESV)

We moved into our first house in 1991, when my twin boys were one. One of their favorite pastimes was to stand by the big picture window and watch the horses in the pasture across the street.

One windless day that first winter, the snowflakes were clumped together and falling gently to earth. It was like creation was holding its breath and providing proof of God’s grace. The boys were mesmerized! Justin stared intently and said with a voice full of awe, “Wow!”

Wow, indeed! I would hope that each of us could see the world’s wonders as if we were seeing it for the first time. Look for the “Wow” moments every day. Truly see the beauty of God’s grace that surrounds us. Close your eyes, take a breath, and concentrate on the sound of your beating heart. Every beat is a thank you for God’s grace, and confirmation of God’s plans for you. You can trust in His mercy and grace to provide for your needs.

Patty VerDouw



Even There: God’s All Reaching Love

Each part of our lives, our very breath, is a gift of God’s grace. God created the heavens and the earth, and God lovingly placed us in the midst of it all. No matter where we go or what we do, God’s grace is there. That is God’s all-reaching, prevenient grace.

Day 1: Awe & Wonder

“Let your work be seen by your servants and your glory by their children.” Psalm 90:16 (Catholic New American Bible)

We had just moved to Iowa and our yard was ablaze with fireflies. The boys were barely three and awestruck. I grabbed mason jars and the neighborhood erupted with their giggles and screams of delight as they filled them with more and more insects. As we sat on the steps and examined the glowing rewards of their work, the questions began. Why don’t we see them during the day? How come they are rainbow colors when they aren’t lit and white when they are? How come our yard has the most fireflies? I told them this was God’s way of welcoming us to Iowa and letting us know he was lighting the way for our family. One of them spoke up and said, “Mom, we need to send them back to their families.” The lids were removed, the captives were free, and sent on their way by smiling boys.

God has a way of getting our attention. It may be the dancing northern lights, the awesome sunrise, the smell of lilacs, a field purple with crocus after a long winter, or the giggles of children as their path is lit toward Jesus.

Our days are full of these little moments of awe - moments that invite us to be thankful. Moments that make you realize that God is there showering you with his love. It may be an occasion of joy that is unexpected or a hug when you most need it.

Thank you, Lord, for your love, no matter where we are, what we’ve done, or how we’ve missed the examples of your grace, your everlasting love and mercy is there.

Patty VerDouw

Day 2: Grace in the Little Things

“Out of his fullness we have all received grace in place of grace already given.” John 1:16 (NIV)

I recently spent 70 minutes taking an 8-point quiz for a college graduate class. I wrestled with the questions and was frustrated before even submitting my answers - nothing seemed clear, there was no one to consult, and I had nowhere to write rationale - just unforgiving electronic boxes to check. I got 5 out of 8 correct - failing. When I saw my grade, I was bitterly disappointed after spending so much time and effort. I questioned whether I had the intelligence to understand the material, if I was foolish to even enter the programs, and if it would even be of any benefit if I did finish! I knew better than to let myself get so upset about such a small thing, but I couldn't seem to help it. I couldn't seem to give myself any grace.

Then a neat thing happened. Out of the blue, a friend texted this quote:

“What if...everything you are going through is preparing you for what you asked for.”

It was like a soft whisper of encouragement straight from our Heavenly Father. It was the grace I needed at that moment. “Out of his fullness we have all received grace in place of grace already given” (John 1:16). The gift of eternal life is grace beyond comprehension, yet God gives us grace in the small spaces too. I pray you too will find His grace in the little things!

Colette Leingang

Day 3: Abundant, Victorious Grace

“Don't be afraid, for I am with you. Don't be discouraged, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you. I will hold you up with my victorious right hand.” Isaiah 41:10 (NLT)

My brother, Gary, walked into my hospital room the day after my twin boys were born. I started crying and said, “Thank You.” He said, “Thanks for what?”

My boys were born five weeks early, very sick, and struggling. The evening of their birth, I was told Greg probably wouldn't make it. He had been born with a knot in his umbilical cord and the cord was wrapped around his neck twice. His twin brother had been gaining weight, but Greg didn't get the nourishment needed to thrive. He was struggling to breathe, blue, and fading fast.

The doctor told me his one last hope was to try and get nourishment to him with a blood transfusion.

Gary had been graced with type O blood that was missing an enzyme. His blood was used exclusively for premature babies. He had gotten a call the night my boys were born to donate blood. He never knew who would receive his blood. I had called Gary that night to tell him about Greg, but was told he was donating blood. That's when I knew where his blood would be used and that my son would be fine. When I saw Greg the next day, he was a pink, alert, squirmy baby that was hungry!

Grace is God's presence in our lives that He bestows abundantly on each of us. He gave Gary the right blood type, missing an enzyme, and allowed him to be available to share that grace with a struggling, nameless infant, that became his God Child. In the 27 years since that day, God truly has brought courage, strength, help and victory.

Patty VerDouw

Day 4: Pursuit

“Or suppose a woman has ten silver coins and loses one. Doesn't she light a lamp, sweep the house and search carefully until she finds it? And when she finds it, she calls her friends and neighbors together and says, 'Rejoice with me; I have found my lost coin.' In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.” Luke 15:8-10 (NIV)

I grew up on a farm in rural ND and was number 3 in a family of six children. It was always a treat to make the 60-mile trip to Minot to shop. I remember one such trip when I was about 5 years old, we had gone into a large department store and our parents instructed us to stay together. It wasn't long before something caught my attention and I forgot the “staying together” rule. After a short stray from the group, I found myself alone and I panicked. I searched for the rest and didn't have to go far when I found my dad with a sly smile and open arms. I started to cry as soon as I saw him. Lesson Learned! I knew he wasn't mad and I remember feeling such relief and safety in the arms of my dad.

Our heavenly father is in relentless pursuit of us. He wants to find us and for us to find him. Each time we find our way back, he opens up his arms, forgives us, and shows us his grace, “a blessing we don't deserve.” How wonderful to have a heavenly Father that only wants us to return to his arms and say yes to his love.

Pray: Heavenly Father, thank you for your gift of grace and for