



Walking Meditation

by Fr Christopher Wojcik



O Lord our God, You have fashioned us with a reason-endowed soul and a beautiful body, and the body serves the reason-endowed soul.

– From the Orthodox Baptism service

To meditate with gratitude on the body is to honor its Creator. It is also an effective tool for calming our racing thoughts, and opening our hearts to God's presence all around.

Walk at a slightly slower pace than normal.

Methodically, thank your body parts for their participation in your walk:

- THANK YOU, FEET FOR FEELING THE (BUMPY/SMOOTH/ROUGH/SLIPPERY/CRUNCHY) GROUND.
- THANK YOU, EARS FOR HEARING THE (BIRD/PLANE/CAR/VOICES/DOG/CONSTRUCTION/WIND).
- THANK YOU, NOSE FOR SMELLING THE (BAKERY/FLOWERS/WATER/GRASS/DUMPSTER).
- THANK YOU, EYES FOR SEEING THE (CLOUDS/TREES/CHILDREN/SUNSHINE).
- THANK YOU, CHEEKS FOR FEELING THE (COLD WIND/WARM SUN).
- THANK YOU, ARM FOR SENSING THAT MOSQUITO BITING.
- THANK YOU, HAND FOR (WAVING TO THE OTHER WALKERS/CARRYING THE WATER BOTTLE).
- THANK YOU, LUNGS FOR MOVING THAT AIR IN AND OUT.

Etc.

Don't be afraid to be earthy or personal – this is just between you and your Creator:

- THANK YOU, GLUTES FOR FLEXING ME UP THIS STEEP HILL.
- THANK YOU, ARMPITS FOR KICKING OUT SWEAT ON THIS HUMID DAY.
- THANK YOU, BLADDER FOR REMINDING ME I SHOULD'VE PEED BEFORE WE LEFT.

Include the parts that don't always work the way you want:

- THANK YOU, SORE BACK FOR LETTING ME KNOW YOU'RE NOT 100% YET.
- THANK YOU, KNEE JOINT FOR REMINDING ME TO GO EASY ON YOU.
- THANK YOU, ANKLE FOR DOING YOUR BEST AGAINST IMPOSSIBLE ODDS.

Repeat for the first 7 minutes of your walk (or the whole thing if you want!).

With practice, you may be able to do this with fewer words – just experiencing the gratitude itself for each body part. But if that's too hard, just keep using the words.

Finally, remember that the focus is **not** to thank the world around you – that's good, of course, but not the point of this meditation. The focus here is to be present in your body. For anything you experience in the world around you, **thank the body part** that lets you experience it. If you see something, thank your eyes. If you hear something, thank your ears. Keep bringing it back to your body. By this, we learn to have ongoing gratitude for how we are made, and for the great gift God has given to us in our beautiful bodies.