

PASTOR'S CORNER

Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving has always been one of my favorite holidays. More than any other holiday, this one speaks to me of family and convivial cheer. Sitting as it does between the two great commercial feasts of Hallowe'en and Christmas, it seems to have escaped all the fuss so characteristic of the others. You will note that this year Christmas decorating started, not after Thanksgiving as in the recent past, but as November dawned. And maybe because Thanksgiving is a secular holiday, the ACLU has been content to leave it alone and resist the temptation to tinker with its many and varied traditions.

Always situated on Thursday also seems to help it keep its place as an anticipated time set aside for family and friends. It's always on the 4th Thursday of November and that convenient placement gives rise to its status as the happy beginning of a four day weekend. The transition to Christmas also traditionally begins on the Friday following Thanksgiving and it used to be quite a sight to see malls and stores suddenly transformed overnight and decorated for Christmas. Alas, for many retailers, the season begins ever earlier and for non-retailers the secularists have made enough headway to remove many civic Christmas displays. Nonetheless, the specialness of the Thanksgiving weekend remains and for many of us it still signals the beginning of the broader Christmas season (I know we're still in Advent, but I still think of this time of year as distinctly Christmas!)

It's interesting that this strong, peculiarly American, celebration has such obvious and significant Christian themes at its core. As you all know, the word "thanksgiving" when rendered into Greek is the very origin of the word we use for the Mass, namely "Eucharist." Since the celebration of the Eucharist is a participation in the life-affirming Passion, death and Resurrection of Our Lord, we can certainly understand what it is we are being asked to be thankful for!

It's unfortunate that as we become more prosperous and secure, we tend to become less and less thankful. Prosperity so frequently leads us to a dullness of spirit, to a presumptuousness of soul, and to an ever-expanding sense of entitlement. It's remarkable, when you think of it, that at a time in our history when we were far less secure and far more impoverished than we are now that our forefathers built our churches, set-up our schools, built highways, bridges and indeed much of the infrastructure of our nation; not to mention fighting and winning a World War!

This current malaise is evident everywhere in our country and so frequently manifests itself in the form of a petulant tendency to whine and grow quickly bored. We have become like the Roman mobs who could only be kept in order by ever more elaborate and diverting forms of pleasure, most of which became more and more violent, or at best, mind-numbingly banal. A glance at the TV Guide will show you just how prevalent low-budget, low-intelligence, reality shows have come to dominate the networks' weekly drivel. The fact that pornographic forms of entertainment dominate the internet speaks for itself. Addiction to internet pornography is epidemic and a genuine threat to married and family life. What drives these many addictions and diversions? A spiritual sloth rooted in thanklessness and self-absorption.

Gratitude is more than just an attitude; it's a way of life. Surely it is a statement of character as to whether or not we choose to whine about the misfortunes of our existence or become more deeply aware of the many gifts we do have and for which we should be thankful. So often, folks become only truly and deeply aware of their blessings at a moment when they are unexpectedly threatened or when a catastrophic medical diagnosis reveals their transitory nature. Why wait until then? Let's start now!

Fr. Stephen Geer

Ordinary Time

Day	Date	Time	Observance	Mass Intention
VIGIL	Nov 25	5:00 pm	Vigil of Christ the King	Betty Susnjara +
SUNDAY	Nov 26	9:00 am	Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe (The Holy Rosary will be prayed in the chapel at 8:30 am)	Mike Moore +
		11:30 am	Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe	Missa pro populo
Monday	Nov 27		No service	
Tuesday	Nov 28	8:30 am	Ferial weekday	Terri Greenfield +
Wednesday	Nov 29	8:30 am	Ferial weekday	Millie Susnjara +
Thursday	Nov 30	10:00 am	St. Andrew, Apostle	Carolyn Tomacelli +
Friday	Dec 1	8:30 am	Ferial weekday	Priest's intention
Saturday	Dec 2	8:30 am	Ferial weekday (The Holy Rosary will be prayed in the chapel at 8:00 am)	STWA
			<u>Readings for the Sunday Mass:</u> Isaiah 63.16b-17, 19b; 64.2-7; Psalm 80; 1 Cor 1.3-9; Mark 13.33-37	
VIGIL		5:00 pm	Vigil of the Sunday Eucharist (Blessing of the Advent Wreath)	Joanna Kong +
SUNDAY	Dec 3	9:00 am	First Sunday of Advent (The Holy Rosary will be prayed in the chapel at 8:30 am)	Henry Chieu Nguyen +
		11:30 am	First Sunday of Advent	Missa pro populo