

Dear Friends in Christ,

What do you think would happen if each one of us suddenly became a more thankful person? Right away, without anything else having to change, without our having to win the lottery, life would be richer. And not just for us, but for everyone else as well.

Thanksgiving has this huge impact because no one likes to be taken for granted - or to see someone that they love taking things for granted. All of us like to be appreciated, all of us like to be thanked, and all of us, I believe, like to see those we love live thankful lives, appreciative lives.

In I Thessalonians, chapter five, verse eighteen, the apostle Paul says something more. He writes: "Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." ; and in Ephesians, chapter five, Paul tells new Christians, "Give thanks to God the Father at all times and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

The norm and standard of the early church of the apostles was really incredible and it had incredible results in their lives, and in the lives of all those around them. They lived happy and triumphant lives, they rejoiced even when they were being afflicted and persecuted, and their fellowship continually grew until it reached the ends of the earth. And so can ours.

Give thanks in all circumstances. Give thanks for everything. Give thanks at all times.

This is a challenge to step beyond remembering God and thanking God for all the wealth that we enjoy in this our promised land. This is a step beyond remembering God and obeying his commands because he has given us fine houses and filled our bellies. This is even a step beyond thanking God, as the leper thanked God, for healing him of his disease through Jesus.

This is what someone called "thanks-living" - it is demanding - and it is rewarding.

It is demanding because instead of wanting to praise God - or to pray to him about the situation with thanksgiving, - we want to feel sorry for ourselves and the trouble we are in.

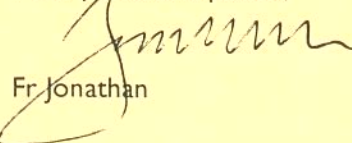
It is rewarding because giving thanks blesses the person who is thanked and it transforms the person who gives thanks. It works the same way everywhere, with everyone, even with God -- when we remember.

When we forget - hard things get harder. When we allow the situation we are in to swallow us up and to swallow all thought of God's power and goodness up; when we begin to think we have earned and deserve all the good things we have, and when we forget that God is able to help us in the midst of all the bad things that occur, well - life becomes bleaker, and true virtue becomes harder to find.

The Good News is that it doesn't have to be that way: God wants us to celebrate his love. God wants us to give thanks in everything and enables us to do so. God doesn't want thanks because he is greedy for praise, the Lord doesn't want it so that he will feel better about himself, he wants it because it will bless us and because it will bless the world he has made.

Our way of thanks-living begins with receiving, by opening our hearts and our hands to receive the gift of Jesus. "Take and eat" he says to each of us in his Eucharist, his act of thanksgiving. And as we do so we reply, "Amen." Thank you, Jesus, thanks be to you and, through you, to the Father, for your Spirit of thanks-living.

Your priest and pastor,



Fr. Jonathan

(Please see over for Fall Events Calendar)

Upcoming Fall Festivities

Sunday September 25, 10am *Feast of St Michael and All Angels. "Back to Church Sunday"*

Our opportunity to practice the ministry of invitation and hospitality. Invite a friend to come with you to the Advent, or a call a parishioner whom you've not see in church, and extend a welcome to them to return with you. Advent Centenary Tote Bags will be on sale.

Thanksgiving Supper, Oct. 7, 6:30pm

Adults \$15 Children 5-12 - \$7 and 4 and under free, Mintrude Bullen has tickets.

Annual Fall Bazaar will be held Sat. Oct. 30, 10- 2pm. Donations of everything welcomed, including the contribution of time to help sort before, and to staff the day of the sale - all appreciated.

Advent Centenary Launch: Advent Sunday Nov. 28

Plans are being finalized for a year-long celebration. Highlights include a parish history book, and visits from Archbishops, the first of which will be Terence Finlay on Advent Sunday Nov. 28 A Calendar of events will be circulated. Meanwhile you will find below a Centenary Prayer you can offer regularly, and a Centenary 'Anthem' to sing (or at least hum) "Great is thy Faithfulness." The Lord has been faithful to the Advent, and for this we give thanks.

Great is thy Faithfulness

Great is thy faithfulness, O God my Father;
there is no shadow of turning with thee;
thou changest not, thy compassions, they fail not;
as thou hast been thou forever will be.

Refrain:

*Great is thy faithfulness! Great is thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning new mercies I see;
all I have needed thy hand hath provided;
great is thy faithfulness. Lord, unto me!*

Summer and winter and springtime and harvest,
sun, moon and stars in their courses above
join with all nature in manifold witness
to thy great faithfulness, mercy and love. Refrain

Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth
thy own dear presence to cheer and to guide;
strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow,
blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside! Refrain

A Centenary Prayer

Great is your faithfulness, O God our Father, and great is our joy at this time as we anticipate the centenary of this parish, established to show forth your glory and dedicated to your Advent.

We thank you for the witness it has maintained down the years as a centre of Christian witness and worship, teaching and service;
we thank you for all who have loyally serviced it as laity and clergy;
we thank you for the continuance of its life and work at the present time.

Accept these our thanksgivings. O God: multiply your blessings upon us today: and lead us forward in the power of your Spirit to fresh ventures of faith in the days to come. through Jesus Christ our Lord who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit one God now and forever. Amen.