

## GIVING THANKS

The person giving thanks is the one who most benefits from doing so. In reflecting on the people, events and things for which one is grateful, ones own being is enlarged and enriched. In a sense, one has cause to be doubly thankful: first, for the original opportunity; secondly, for the fact that one is motivated and able to express ones appreciation.

The act of being grateful helps one to see things in a new perspective. As a consequence, one may act in a more creative and responsive manner. And thus one may arrive at yet a third reason for feeling elated. This time, for the new life which has welled up within oneself and which may prompt one to throw blessings and praise -- and even good works -- to the four winds.

Arlington, Va.

Nov. 28, 1968

NoVa Community

Thanksgiving Day

A SECRET DEBT

AND A

RAISED HAT

When I was brought down from my prison to the Court of Bankruptcy, between two policemen, ----waited in the long dreary corridor that, before the whole crowd whom an action so sweet and simple hushed into silence, he might gravely raise his hat to me, as, handcuffed and with bowed head, I passed him by. Men have gone to heaven for smaller things than that. It was in this spirit, and with this mode of love, that the saints knelt down to wash the feet of the poor, or stooped to kiss the leper on the cheek. I have never said one word to him about what he did. I do not know to the present moment whether he is aware that I was even conscious of his action. It is not a thing for which one can render formal thanks in formal words. I store it in the treasure house of my heart. I keep it there as a secret debt that I am glad to think I can never possibly repay...

When wisdom has been profitless to me, philosophy barren, and the proverbs and phrases of those who have sought to give me consolation as dust and ashes in my mouth, the memory of that little, silent act of love has unsealed for me all the wells of pity, ... and brought me out of bitterness of lonely exile into harmony with the wounded, broken, and great heart of the world.

Oscar Wilde, author

Thanksgiving Day  
Nov. 28, 1968.  
NoVa Community  
Arlington, Va.

LITURGICAL CELEBRATION OF THE NOVA COMMUNITY  
Sunday, Nov. 18, 1973 - Joyce Kilmer School

THEME: Personal and Communal Commitment to Social Action.

THEME STATEMENT: Next Thursday, we celebrate Thanksgiving. Then we shall pause and reflect upon those things we count as our blessings and for which we thank God. We also reflect at this time on how, in a small way, we can share these blessings with our brothers and sisters. Whether this entails a personal gift of love through a visit, or a material gift of money, food, or clothing, it is the natural completion of our blessings. So we choose this Sunday to reflect generally on how we share our blessings. We choose it to remind ourselves that even though Arlington, Fairfax and Montgomery counties are among the highest income counties in the nation; a full 10% of the families in the Washington metropolitan area live in poverty; that although the median income in the area is nearly \$13000.00 per family, fully 15% receive less than 1/3 of that amount. And income alone does not describe the needs of those troubled by the rejection of age, family or their own minds. We also choose this Sunday to bring to the community the organized channels in which we may share not only the blessings of our income, but also, and more importantly, the blessing of our lives. The organizations you will meet represent, but by no means exhaust, the possibilities for social action here within our own geographical community. We present this liturgy as an opportunity, not a reproach. For those who already have committed as much of themselves as they can, we mean it as a pep talk, an exhortation to keep up the fight. For those who are seeking, we hope we can provide some answers. Besides Thanksgiving, Thursday is also the tenth anniversary of the death of a man who meant a great deal to each of us. It now seems meaningless, because it has been commercialized, distorted and abused, but in terms of our commitment to social action, the phrase still means a great deal: "Ask not...."

ENTRANCE: (The community will enter in procession following the celebrant, as the recording "Blessed Are" by Joan Baez is played. The words of the song are printed for your meditation as you enter.)

"BLESSED ARE"

Blessed are the one-way ticket  
Holders on the one-way street  
Blessed are the midnight riders  
For in the Shadow of God they sleep  
Blessed are the huddled hikers  
Staring out at falling rain  
Wond'ring at the retribution  
in their personal acquaintance with pain  
Blessed are the blood relations  
Of the young ones who have died  
Who had not the time or patience  
To carry on this earthly ride.  
Rain will come and winds will blow  
Wild deer die in the mountain snow

Birds will beat at Heaven's wall,  
 What comes to one must come to all.  
 For you and I are one-way ticket  
 Holders on that one-way street  
 Which lies across a golden valley  
 Where the waters of joy and hope run deep  
 So if you pass the parents weeping  
 Of the young ones who have died  
 Take them to your warmth and keeping  
 For blessed are the tears they cried  
 And many were the years they tried  
 Take them to that valley wide  
 And let their souls be pacified.

OPENING PRAYER

FIRST READING: James 2, 14-23.

SECOND READING: Selections from Anthony Padovano, DAWN WITHOUT DARKNESS.

GOSPEL: Excerpts from Matthew.

DIALOGUE WITH REPRESENTED ORGANIZATIONS: In lieu of our traditional dialogue, we hope that members of the community will move to the rear of the auditorium to speak with representatives of social action organizations about their programs and needs, or else to talk among themselves of their own commitments to social action.

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL: We especially ask you to bring to the community your needs or the needs of others known to you.

PEACE GREETING

OFFERTORY: SONG - "WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS NOW IS LOVE" (one chorus will be sung, the musicians will play the verse alone, and a second chorus will be sung by all.)

The OFFERTORY PROCESSION will include symbols which represent means through which we are able to respond to our brothers.

"WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS NOW"

What the world needs now is love, sweet love;  
 It's the only thing that there's just too little of.  
 What the world needs now is love, sweet love;  
 No not just for some, but for everyone.

Holy, Holy, Holy, (spoken)

EUCCHARISTIC ACCLAMATION: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ lives in the lost, lonely and wretched.

LORD'S PRAYER: (spoken)

COMMUNION SONG: "LAST, LONELY, AND WRETCHED" - Joan Baez (recorded)

The words are printed for your meditation.

You're tired and you're poor, you long to be free  
 But in this God-forsaken land you find no home, no family.  
 On the many roads that you wandered since the day of your birth  
 You've become one of the Last, Lonely, and Wretched.  
 Your hair is matted, your face and hands are dirty  
 And the years that you've toiled must number somewhere near  
 The deepening of a sadness broke finally into madness (thirty)  
 You are truly one of the Last, Lonely, and Wretched.  
 Your eyes are wild and frightening, at the same time they are  
 blessed.  
 And I wonder if God died, turned his back, or only just rested.  
 As you walked out on the seventh day, through the big gates  
 and on your way,  
 To become one of the Last, Lonely, and Wretched.  
 For once you were a child, your cheeks were red, and you were  
 well fed,  
 You laughed and played till you got teary,  
 Ran to your mother when you were weary  
 But somehow you were forsaken, alone I'll not bear the blame  
 And somewhere all was taken, your mind, your body, your name  
 Forgive us our unkindness, our desertion, and our blindness  
 To you, the Last, Lonely, and Wretched  
 Forgive us, all the Last, Lonely, and Wretched.

SILENCEANNOUNCEMENTS AND INTRODUCTIONSDISMISSAL: "THE WITNESS SONG"

(follow musicians and repeat  
 lines)

Shout out my soul of the love of God  
 And go forth and witness forever  
 Forever and ever.

Rise up my brothers, give glory to God  
 I said, stand up my brothers, give glory to God  
 And love one another as He still loves us  
 For ever and ever.

Shout out my soul of the love of God  
 I said, cry out my soul of the love of God  
 And we'll go forth and witness for ever  
 For ever and ever.

Rise up my brothers, give glory to God  
 I said, stand up my brothers, give glory to God  
 And love one another as he still loves us  
 For ever and ever.

Planners: Teddi Ahrens  
 Kathy Fredgren  
 Meg & John Tuccillo  
 Larry Goldschmitt

O.S.A.

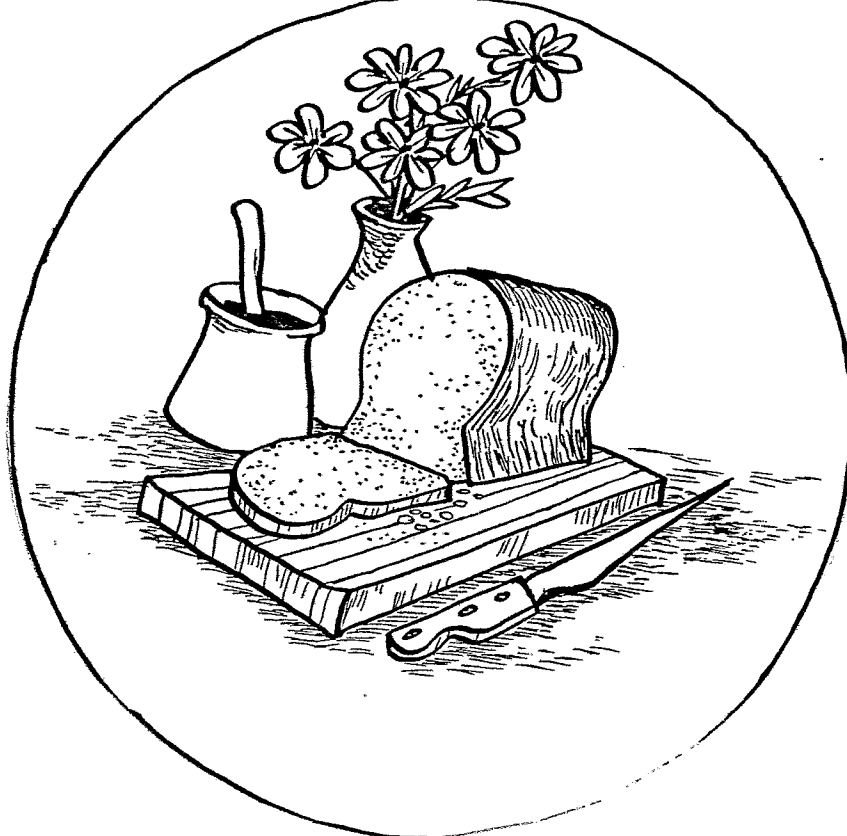
Please feel free to continue your dialogue with the organization  
 representatives following this liturgy.

(over)

NOVA

COMMUNITY

NOV. 20, 1980



BREAD

FOR

THE

HUNGRY

Lord God and Giver of All Good Gifts,  
we are grateful as we pause before this meal,  
for all the blessings of Life that You give to us.  
Daily, we are fed with good things,  
nourished by friendship and care,  
feasted with forgiveness and understanding.  
And so, mindful of Your continuous care,  
we pause to be grateful  
for the blessings of this table.

As we break our fast together  
and share our lives by word and laughter,  
Let us be mindful of the needs of others —  
those who are without food and drink:

With grateful and prayerful hearts,  
we lift up this bread to You ((lift up bread))  
MAY your glory surround it  
and all this meal.

AMEN.

C. Mathews, "The Thanksgiving Sermon: From Chanticleer"

... What is the life of man without creature-comforts, and the stomach of the son of man with no aid from the kitchen? Despise not the day of small things, while there are pullets on the spit, and let every fowl have fair play, between the jaws of thy philosophy. Are not puddings made to be sliced, and piecrust to be broken? Go thy ways, then, according to good sense, good cheer, good appetite, the Governor's proclamation, and every other good thing under the sun; --render thanks for all the good things of this life, and good cookery among the rest; eat, drink, and be merry; make not a lean laudation of the bounties of Providence, but let a lively gusto follow a long grace. Feast thankfully, and feast hopefully, feast in good will to all mankind, Grahamites included; feast in the full and joyous persuasion, that while the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, dinner-time, pudding-time, and supper-time, are not likely to go out of fashion; -- feast with exulting confidence in the continuance of cooks, kitchens, and orthodox expounders of Scripture and the constitution in our ancient, blessed, and fat-sided commonwealth--feast in short, like a good Christian, proving all things; relishing all things, hoping all things, expecting all things, and enjoying all things. Let a good stomach for dinner go hand in hand with a good mind for sound doctrine. Let us all be thankful that a gracious Providence hath furnished each and all with a wholesome and bountiful dinner this day; and, if there be none so furnished, let him now make it known, and we will instantly contribute thereto of our separate abundance. There are none who murmur--we all, therefore, have a thanksgiving dinner waiting for us; let us hie home cheerily, and in a becoming spirit of mirth and devotion partake thereof....

Reprinted from Thanksgiving: Its Origin, Celebration and Significance as Related in Prose and Verse, edited by Robert Haven Schauffler, Our American Holidays series (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1943), pp. 181-182.

Thanksgiving, 1984

We give thanks for knowing you  
And for your many kind gifts to us and to NOVA.  
May you be blessed with health, good work and dear ones,  
And may our shared vision prove a continuing bond.

Yours,

THANKSGIVING PRAYER, 1989

Dear God:

When the autumn leaves have been put to rest  
and the first snow powders our mountains and streets,  
when the earth has yielded up food and fuel  
for another year's sustenance.

It is fitting and right  
that the people of this republic gather  
to give thanks.  
We speak with sincerity and devotion, O God,  
grateful for your free and boundless mercy.

We thank you for life and love;  
for the mystery and majesty of existence,  
for beauty and the miracle of conscious life.  
We are grateful for the ties that bind us  
to family, friends, church and society.  
We are grateful for their labors and values  
which have given us a rich and manifold inheritance.

We thank you, especially, for our civic freedoms...  
for peace... and democracy;  
we thank you, as well, for a functioning government.

We are equally grateful for our faith.  
It gives us hope...a future and vision for it.  
It makes us feel connected and supported  
and it provides our lives with meaning and music.

In our kind of world, marked by many crises,  
we give special thanks for our families.  
We thank you for the love and security  
we experience in its circle.  
We thank you for encouragement, for standards and  
for daily generosity.

For once we are aware  
that our gratitude is mainly for life's intangibles  
and not for consumer goods.  
We are thankful for what health we enjoy...  
for work, paid and unpaid,  
which shapes and directs our time.  
We are grateful for who we are and can become.

Indeed, we are grateful  
for human imagination, memory and reason  
and we dedicate ourselves to use these wisely  
in the pursuit of the common good  
and personal perfection.

May you grace, O God,  
bring us to yet another Thanksgiving, next year.  
And may the days in between be illuminated by our present  
spirit of gratitude,  
so that every day becomes a day  
for which we bless you.

AMEN.



## THE BREAD OF LIFE

Refrain:

Thanks and praise be  
to the Bread of Life...  
the transforming Word...  
the animating Presence of this, our holy body.  
May we never lose your confidence, O God.  
And may we always find ways to in-corporate you.

Vs. 1

Dear God, our Bread of Life  
You so longed to be  
near us...walk with us...and befriend us  
that You empowered the words of Eucharistic institution  
to become a two-way communication, in faith.  
Emmanuel: God-with-us, in bread and wine.  
We thank you and praise you  
for this love and dynamic exchange that keeps us  
from being alone or without nourishment. Refrain.

Vs. 2

We give thanks also  
for the fidelity of the Church  
who carried out the hope and instructions  
You expressed on that first Holy Thursday.  
For 2000 years she remembered and spoke  
Your fruitful words  
to faithful believers.  
Holy words and public, shared faith  
made you present, over and again  
to every age and all corners of the world. Refrain.

Vs. 3

We offer thanks and praise also  
for the way Your love and presence  
have made of us one body,  
Your earthly extension of being.  
Help us to be  
healthy, sane, and together,  
able and willing  
to invent structures and relationships  
which will continue to manifest  
the love You bear for all creation. Refrain.

Dear God,

We, of NOVA, dedicate this meal of thanksgivings (and  
alternatively, evening of appreciation) to our Padre Cadre  
who have nourished us  
with your Word and Eucharist  
for all our years together.

They have been true friends and supporters  
in our faith journey;  
perceptive and patient with our needs;  
competent and honest in their counsel;  
truthful yet serious about our Tradition;  
serious about becoming fully human.

Because they have treated us as equal  
we have dared to argue with them,  
learned from them,  
enjoyed being with them,  
love them.

It is not easy, these days, to be a man--  
let alone a priest.

So we ask a special blessing upon our presiders:  
Be present to them in their struggles and failures,  
as well as in the joy of their earned success.  
Most of all, help them to trust their call and gifts.  
We ask for all this in the name of Christ  
Who is Lord and brother to us all. AMEN

Sonja M. Donahue  
October 13, 1990

December 20, 1992

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Gil and Sonja: Gracious God,  
we raise our voices  
to You and this community of faith  
for your blessings of hope and support  
during Gil's weeks of treatment.

Thank you for helping us endure  
and preserve a semblance of normalcy.

Thank you for the doctors' and treatment  
team's competence and compassion.

Thank you  
for the inquiries, gifts, and good wishes  
of friends.

Thank you  
for the love and prayers  
of family, near and far.

All these signs of friendship  
have borne us up, gracious God,  
and made us feel safe  
under Your mantle of care.

Grant us now  
a time of recovery and refreshment  
and a stable time of health  
that we may celebrate  
the life You have returned to us  
and share it, in gratitude,  
with those around us.

All: We pray also  
for all others  
who suffer some illness and must bear it  
alone or in poor circumstances.  
May they never feel far from your spirit,  
O God, and may our caring and prayers  
be of consolation to them.

Creator God  
You renew and refresh,  
You heal and save,  
You inspire and transform!  
We praise and thank you.

All(sing): Glory to God, glory  
O praise God, alleluia  
glory to God, glory  
O praise the name of our God.

THANKSGIVINGS PRAYER, 1994

Dear God:

When the autumn leaves have been put to rest  
and the first snow powders our mountains and streets,  
when the earth has yielded up food and fuel  
for another year's sustenance,

It is fitting and right  
that the people of this republic gather  
to give thanks.

We speak with sincerity and devotion, O God,  
grateful for your free and boundless mercy.

We thank you for life and love;  
for the mystery and majesty of existence,  
for beauty and the miracle of conscious life.  
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to family, friends, church and society.  
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which have given us a rich and manifold inheritance.

We thank you, especially, for our civic freedoms...  
for peace... and democracy;  
we thank you, as well, for a functioning government.

We are equally grateful for our faith.  
It gives us hope... a future and vision for it.  
It makes us feel connected and supported  
and it provides our lives with meaning and music.

In our kind of world, marked by many crises,  
we give special thanks for our families.  
We thank You for the love and security  
we experience in its circle.  
We thank You for encouragement, for standards and  
for daily generosity.

□□□□□

For once we are aware  
that our gratitude is mainly for life's intangibles  
and not for consumer goods.  
We are thankful for what health we enjoy...  
for work, paid and unpaid,  
which shapes and directs our time.  
We are grateful for who we are and can become.

Indeed, we are grateful  
for human imagination, memory and reason  
and we dedicate ourselves to use these wisely  
in the pursuit of the common good  
and personal perfection.

May your grace, O God,  
bring us to yet another Thanksgiving next year.  
And may the days in between be illuminated by our  
present spirit of gratitude,  
so that every day becomes a day  
for which we bless You.                      AMEN.

SMD

Dear God:

You renew and nurture us, every day of our lives.

We praise and bless you  
for this liturgy,  
for Dan's presence,  
and for the companionship of friends.

We thank you  
for the gifts of sight and hearing,  
as well as for in-sight  
by which we understand life  
and your love for us.

We thank you  
for stillness and solitude.  
These quiet times  
heal and replenish our spirit.  
They give us time to pray for all who are dear to us  
and to ask blessings on our hurried and frazzled world.  
For this chance to share in your work  
of on-going creation,  
we thank you

We thank you, as well  
for freedom, political and personal.  
May we always use this gift  
to encourage and empower others.

We thank you, dear God  
for habit and routine.  
They make us feel secure.  
But we thank you also  
for change and newness, these lend spice to our lives.  
For visits from John and Kay.  
For news from friends,  
For happy diversions on TV,  
For cards, newspapers and books,  
we thank you.

We thank you, dear God,  
for the sunsets and farewells of autumn.  
They teach us about natural separation and happy endings.  
They are also the foretastes of  
new sun rises ... and of doorways opening to us.  
We thank you for these promises of a new and future life,  
You have always been a welcoming and caring God to us.  
We put our trust and faith in you.

We thank and praise you, dear God,  
who blessed us, in the beginning, does now,  
and will tomorrow. Amen.

①

Subj: Attitude of Gratitude  
Date: 99-07-27 07:22:33 EDT  
From: JMausertmo  
To: JMausertmo, AJRose@MAILA.wm.edu, Omarron  
To: CCMiller, kwc2327@yahoo.com, GED21, RFK1971  
To: PMooney145, SallyM45, fortbud@juno.com  
To: Costello@chass.utoronto.ca, gkohler@erols.com  
To: otorres@icepr.com

> LORD, THANK YOU

- >
- > Lord, thank you for this sink of dirty dishes; we have plenty of food
- > to eat.
- >
- > Thank you for this pile of dirty, stinky laundry; we have plenty of
- > nice clothes to wear.
- >
- > And I would like to thank you, Lord, for those unmade beds; they were
- > so warm and comfortable last night. I know that many have no bed.
- >
- > My thanks to you, Lord, for this bathroom, complete with all the
- > splattered mess, soggy, grimy towels and dirty lavatory; they are so
- > convenient.
- >
- > Thank you for this finger-smudged refrigerator that needs defrosting so
- > badly; it has served us faithfully for many years. It is full of
- > cold
- > drinks and enough leftovers for two or three meals.
- >
- > Thank you, Lord, for this oven that absolutely must be cleaned today;
- > it has baked so many things over the years.
- >
- > The whole family is grateful for that tall grass that needs mowing, the
- > lawn that needs raking; we all enjoy the yard.
- >
- > Thank you, Lord, even for that slamming screen door. My kids are
- > healthy and able to run and play.
- >
- > Lord, the presence of all these chores awaiting me says You have richly
- > blessed my family. I shall do them cheerfully and I shall do them
- > gratefully.
- >
- > Anyone can count the number of seeds in an apple, but only God knows
- > the number of apples in a seed.
- >
- > Even though I clutch my blanket and growl when the alarm rings, Thank
- > you, Lord, that I can hear. There are many who are deaf.
- >
- > Even though I keep my eyes closed against the morning light as long as
- > possible, Thank you, Lord, that I can see. Many are blind.
- >
- > Even though I huddle in my bed and put off rising, Thank you, Lord,
- > that I have the strength to rise. There are many who are bedridden.
- >
- > Even though the first hour of my day is hectic, when socks are lost,
- > toast is burned and tempers are short, my children are so loud,
- > Thank
- > you, Lord, for my family. There are many who are lonely.
- >

2

> Even though our breakfast table never looks like the pictures in  
> magazines and the menu is at times not balanced, Thank you, Lord, for  
the food  
> we have. There are many who are hungry.

> Even though the routine of my job is often monotonous, Thank you,  
> Lord, for the opportunity to work. There are many who have no job.

> Even though I grumble and bemoan my fate from day to day and wish my  
> circumstances were not so modest, Thank you, Lord, for life.

> -By unknown  
>



Psalm 30: A Psalm of Thanksgiving (all, together)

RESPONSE (ALL) I praise you, Yahweh, because you have saved me  
and kept my enemies from gloating over me.

I cried to you for help, my God  
and you healed me.

You brought me back from the world of the dead.  
I was with those who go down to the depths below,  
but you restored my life.

RESPONSE

Sing praise to Yahweh, you faithful people!  
Remember what God has done and give thanks!  
Yahweh's anger lasts only a moment,  
God's goodness for a lifetime.

There may be tears during the night,  
but joy comes in the morning.

I felt secure and said to myself,  
"I will never be defeated."

RESPONSE

You are good to me, Yahweh,  
you have kept me safe as in a mountain fortress.

But when you hid yourself from me,  
I was filled with fear.

I called to you, Yahweh;  
I begged for your help.

What good will come from my death?

What profit from my going to the grave?

Are dead people able to praise you?

Can they proclaim your unfailing goodness?

Hear me, Yahweh, and be merciful!

RESPONSE

Help me, Yahweh!

You have changed my sadness into a joyful dance;  
you have taken off my clothes of mourning  
and given me garments of joy.

So I will not be silent;

I will sing praise to you.

Yahweh, you are my God;

RESPONSE

I will give thanks to you forever.

## Prayer of Thanksgiving

Sonja M. Donahue

Gracious God:

We thank you for Jesus  
who freed our spirit  
from death and narrow self-interest,  
who made possible  
our home-coming to you,  
and who gifted us  
with a universal outlook  
by means of which  
we can own a future and purpose for our lives.

We thank you for Jesus  
who demonstrated  
how to love  
you, our neighbor, and self.  
The love Jesus showed us  
gave us a way  
to accept and cherish our humanity.  
We thank you  
for this human nature  
which Jesus blessed  
by living it to the full.  
We offer it now back to you,  
in praise and wonder.

We thank you also  
for Christ's living body, our Church.  
May it be true to your Spirit  
and mission.  
May it provide leadership through encouragement,  
and unity through service.  
May it preserve  
the good  
you have already done among us  
and be unafraid of the future,  
for you have promised us  
your guidance.

Gracious God,  
help us to live  
in these ever-changing end-times  
with forgiveness  
with hope  
with commitment to do good.  
Help us to remember  
you  
are always with us.  
We make this prayer  
in Jesus' name. Amen.

## A GOOD THANKSGIVING

Said Old Gentleman Gay, "On a Thanksgiving  
Day,  
If you want a good time, then give something away."  
So he sent a fat turkey to Shoemaker Price,  
And the shoemaker said, "What a big bird! How  
nice!  
And, since such a good dinner's before me, I ought  
To give poor Widow Lee the small chicken I  
bought."

"This fine chicken, O see!" said the pleased Widow  
Lee,  
"And the kindness that sent it, how precious to me!  
I would like to make someone as happy as I--  
I'll give Washerwoman Bidly my big pumpkin pie."  
"And, O sure!" Bidly said, "tis the queen of all  
pies!  
Just to look at its yellow face gladdens my eyes!  
Now it's my turn, I think; and a sweet ginger-cake  
For the motherless Finigan children I'll bake."

"A sweet-cake all our own! 'Tis too good to be  
true!"  
Said the Finigan children Rose, Denny and  
Hugh;  
"It smells sweet of spice, and we'll carry a slice  
To poor little lame Jake--who has nothing that's  
nice."

"O, I thank you, and thank you!" said little lame  
Jake:  
"O what a bootiful, bootiful cake!"  
And O, such a big slice! I will save all the crumbs,  
And will give'em to each little Sparrow that  
comes!"

And the sparrows, they twittered, as if they would  
say,  
Like Old Gentleman Gay, "On a Thanksgiving  
Day.  
If you want a good time, then give something  
away!"

Annie Douglas Green Robinson

From POEMS OF JOY AND HOPE, compiled by Kay Anne  
Carson, A Little Treasury of Gold, (New York:  
Inspirational Press, A Division of Budget Book  
Service, Inc, 1993), pp. 58-59.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Priest: We come together to thank you, Lord, for your son Jesus Christ. You sent him to us, and he answered your call so freely, so totally, that we are still overwhelmed by his example; and we still walk in the bright light he brought into our world.

All: We thank you for him, / especially because he was so much at home here with us. / As friend and brother, he shared all our joys, all our sorrows. / We thank you, Father, for your Son, who did all the great human things--being born of a woman, eating and drinking with his friends; / and he did all of this with a full heart. He went so far as to share the experience of death that must come to every human person. We thank you because he gave himself completely to this world.

Priest: He showed his love for us, and his willingness to give himself completely on the night before he died. He took the bread, said the blessing, broke the bread, and gave it to his friends saying: Take this, all of you, and eat; this is my body which will be given up for you.

In the same way, he took the cup.....  
Whenever you share in this bread, and drink from this cup, you will do it in memory of me.

All: In a spirit of gratitude and joy, Father, we offer this sign of our faith. / We bring to mind his sufferings, his death and burial. / Yet above all, we joyfully recall how you brought him back to life, how you brought him back to us. / We recall how you exalted his name above every other name, / the name of that unforgettable man, who lived with us, / who prayed for us / who will come again to make all things new.

Priest: We ask you, Lord, to send us his total power and love, your Holy Spirit, so that, full of hope, we can get on with our tasks on earth, taking care that no one of your people ever has to talk alone.

All: We pray that we may be peacemakers, and be happy, and that we may find you / and close by you, all who have gone before us in faith. We pray that we may see you, and speak with you, Father, as one friend to another, / in the presence of Jesus, your son and our brother / through whom you give us everything that is good.

THROUGH CHRIST, WITH CHRIST, IN CHRIST,  
ALL GLORY AND HONOR COMES TO YOU FROM YOUR COMMUNITY,  
UNITED IN LOVE BY THE POWER OF THE SPIRIT,  
FOREVER AND EVER. AMEN!!!

THE GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

ALL: We thank you, Lord God almighty, for you are a God of men,/  
for you are not ashamed to be called our God.  
We thank you, God, for you know us all by name,/  
and you hold the world in your hands./  
We thank you for having created us,/  
that we should all be made one with you,/  
to be your people here on earth./

PRIEST: Blessed are you, creator of all that is, / blessed are  
you for giving us a place of freedom and of life. Blessed are you,  
for the light of our eyes, and for the air we breathe. We thank  
you for the whole of creation, for all the works of your hands,  
for all that you have done among us through Jesus Christ, our Lord./

ALL: Therefore, together with all the living, /  
and all who have gone before us in faith, / we praise your name,  
O Lord, our God / as we say together:

Holy, holy, holy, Lord of all powers. /  
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Come and deliver us, Lord most high.  
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Come and deliver us, Lord most high.

PRIEST: We thank you, holy Father, Lord our God, for Jesus Christ,  
your beloved son, whom you called and sent to serve us and give  
us light. We thank you, because you sent him to bring your  
kingdom to the poor, to bring redemption to all captive people,  
and to be forever and for all mankind, the likeness and the form  
of your constant love and goodness.

ALL: We thank you for this unforgettable man, / who has  
fulfilled everything that is human--our life and death. /  
We thank you, because he gave himself, heart and soul, to this world.

PRIEST: For on the night he was delivered up, etc.....  
Do this in memory of me.

ALL: Therefore, Lord our God, we present this sign of our faith;  
we call to mind the suffering and death of your son,  
his resurrection from the dead, his entry into your glory. /  
We recall that he will intercede for us, / and that he will come  
to do justice to the living and the dead, / on the day you have  
appointed. /

PRIEST: Send over us your Holy Spirit, and give a new face  
to this earth that is dear to us. May there be peace wherever people  
live, the peace we cannot make ourselves, the peace that is more  
powerful than all violence, the power of Jesus Christ here among us.

ALL: Then your name will be made holy, / Lord our God, through  
him, and with him, and in him, / everywhere on earth, and in this  
community of the Holy Spirit, world without end. AMEN.

# An American Thanksgiving

By Henry Fairlie

**I**F ONE WAS NOT RAISED in America, it is easy to love it for the wrong reasons.

If anyone had asked me, this would have been my text for a Thanksgiving sermon; and one may say in passing that one wishes that there still were sermons. At least the clergy in the past had to justify their livings by giving great sermons on holy days and feast days. Nowadays they seem to think that we cannot stand anything more than a little therapy. It's as if Jonathan Edwards had got up in the pulpit and wheedled, "I'm OK . . . You're OK . . . God's OK."

No wonder that he died almost as soon as he took up his appointment as president of Yale. They probably asked him to submit his sermons to the alumni association, and warned him that Kingman Brewster did not raise funds by condemning people.

But — to my text. It is not easy for a European to love France — or Spain — or Italy — for the wrong reasons. All of Europe has been there a long time, and has endured much the same history. Its history has been marvellous. No other combination of peoples in the world has been so vital and creative. As Ortega y Gasset once said, speaking as a great Spaniard and a great European, the peoples of Europe have been like a swarm of bees: innumerable bees but a single flight. Wherever one is born in Europe, even in the offshore island of Britain, that history is under one's feet from the day one is born. Wherever one goes in Europe, one walks where the Romans marched. There are the same ruins. There are the same cathedrals. They are different in this aspect or that, of course, but one walks always among the tombs of one's ancestors.

One cannot love any of it for the wrong reasons. When the Times Literary Supplement welcomed America to Europe at the end of World War I, beseeching it to stay, to bring its art and its literature, it said that America at least did not know the fear and failure that lay at the heart of the Old World. One cannot even love that fear and failure for the wrong reasons. Europe's knowledge of it is part of Europe's greatness, and as a European it is in one's bones.

So one gazes, as a stranger still, on America, and beseeches it: Be different! You have got to be different! You must be the last, best of the earth! And all at once one finds oneself lifting aloft both the Union flag and the Confederate flag, because as a stranger one can carry both, wearing both the Blue and the Gray, and singing American songs more fervently than Americans themselves.

But one gets it all wrong. One cannot give thanks properly. One cannot love America in the right way for the right reasons, not even as someone who has preceded one here but chosen to become an American can do. One remains a stranger, and wants to love too much.

I am not writing this apologetically. As I have said, this is my Thanksgiving sermon, on my own text, and I am giving it, even if you are, wriggling in your pews. In a way, it may

not be I who am giving the sermon, but that other person with whom I associate, Fairlie at Large. My point can perhaps be best made personally. After a fairly long time of writing these essays, more or less consistently, I think it is worth trying to pull a general point out of them, and to do it in front of the readers. For the readers' letters, with all their gracious courtesies to me, have in part prompted this sermon.

I often say in private that I do not travel this country, wishing to know it, in order to meet Anglophiles. But by the same token, I think there is a danger of being an Americanophile; even worse, since I write, a professional Americanophile.

I do not mean that I do this deliberately, certainly not for venal reasons, to bring my messages of sweetness and light, as I find them in America, by virtue of a grant from Mobil Oil. I have read closely the observations of more than 200 British visitors to America over the years and, for all the acuteness and sometimes brilliance of their observations, I find in them the same danger: so strong a wish to love America that they love it for the wrong reasons.



**I** WAS ONCE firmly corrected on this point. I was speaking at a UCLA seminar in Bicentennial year. The subject was "Whatever Happened to the American Dream?" I said that the American Dream was right here. Actual. Existing. I recited the good things of American life — and they are all true. I recited the amazing things of the American achievement — and they are all true. They sometimes need to be recited. But when I had done, a young American professor went to the rostrum. "Beware!" she said. "Beware of the European who does not take the American Dream seriously enough!"

I have been hit over the head several times in my life, when I have deserved it, but never has a hand descended so accurately on my cranium, right where it was needed. For it is inevitable that as a European I should love what America has already done, love it for the freedom it already has, for the degree of equality it already has, for the prosperity it already has, for the amount of tolerance it already has. For the Bill of Rights it already has . . . For the Supreme Court it already has . . . And it is inevitable also, then, that I sometimes wonder why Americans are not just grateful for what they already have, and for what in 357 years they and their country have accomplished.

This does not mean that I should suddenly write the opposite of what I have been writing, and certainly not the opposite of what I see, for a traveler may still be allowed to rejoice with fresh eyes at what the native takes for granted. But the problem which has beset every visitor for all these years remains as difficult as ever. We will not let America be just America, and ask it to be something other and more, and especially that it redeem. If it does not redeem, it is then easy to say, it has therefore failed.

It is difficult for a European to understand that America already has a long history. Yet three and a half centuries is a long time. It may in fact be the final condescension of the European not to realize that Europe itself was rather unmade in 1620, that the terrible religious wars had yet to be brought to an end, and that Europe as we have known

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Fairlie  
at  
Large



Norman Rockwell's World War II poster, "Freedom From Want"

t for three centuries was given its shape only by the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648. What the Americanophile does not have in his bones is America's history.

I may know a lot of facts about American history. I perhaps know more from books about American history than many Americans. But I was not reared on it or in it. This is obvious in even the smallest ways. I like baseball. I may even know its present players. I may read its histories. But the folklore of baseball is not in me. I am not sure that Babe Ruth existed, at least not outside books.

I am not even sure what Thanksgiving is about, even though I once brought tears to strong American eyes at a Thanksgiving dinner, by describing what America meant to me. I am aware only that there is no other holiday quite like it in the rest of the world.

Perhaps this is the only thing that an outsider can say:

that America is now a country with a long history. It has its own ruins. It has buried its own dead. It has built its own cathedrals. Because none of them are like Europe's, it is easy to think that America has no history, and one cannot love properly someone without a history, someone whose history one does not know. Perhaps I am wrong — and here I go again, offering European observations about America — but it is my impression that, during the past two generations, America has itself become more self-consciously a historical country, aware that it also now is quite old, that it is its past as well as the future it set out to be.

Perhaps it has changed. Or perhaps I have.

*Fairlie, a regular contributor to Outlook, is a British journalist who has lived in the United States for 12 Thanksgivings.*



GENESIS: A LIVING CONVERSATION

□  
Communal Prayer (spoken by all, together)□

□  
□  
Living God,□

□  
□  
We pray□  
for the gift of Your spirit.□  
Your spirit □  
is always eager□  
to pour itself out,□  
eager to enflesh itself,□  
eager to combine□  
with what had previous existence,□  
is now, and may yet be.□

□  
Help us,□  
your struggling offspring,□  
to bring□  
good purpose□  
out of conflicting interests□  
and confusing alternatives.□  
Lead us from indecision to commitment,□  
from self-centeredness to love,□  
from anxiety to trust,□  
from anger to joy.□

□  
Make us willing□  
to give□  
the time, energy and co-operation□  
which creation and transformation require.□  
Help us to strive for excellence,□  
yet recognize the value of good (enough)□  
which leaves room□  
for ongoing perfection□  
and the mind and hand productions□  
of future generations.□

□  
Help us to be good stewards□  
of all you have already created,□  
and to include You,□  
divine and empathic Spirit,□  
in all our human enterprises.□

□  
We ask this□  
in the name of Jesus, the Christ□  
Who lived and died□  
so God's hand of blessing□  
may reach out to all. AMEN.□

□

## For GENESIS: A LIVING CONVERSATION

Opening reflection by Prayer Leader:

Bountiful, creative God  
once You made heaven and earth  
from chaos.

You brought forth  
light from darkness.

Similarly,  
we must find good purpose  
from the oceans of information  
which engulf us.

You separated land from water.

We must balance  
the good of things with the values of spirit.

You made a vast array  
of plants and animals,  
each at home in their niche.

We create  
diverse culture, languages, software and interpretations  
which require  
an over-arching, unifying value system.

You created human being  
in Your very likeness.

We have yet to organize  
structures of equality and dignity  
for all Your human descendants.

Sonja Donahue  
7/7/90 ?