

"THANKSGIVING DAY PROCLAMATION"

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Church
106 East 86th Street
New York, New York 10028
November 20, 1983

Thanksgiving Proclamation

WASHINGTON, Nov. 12 — Following is the text of President Reagan's Thanksgiving Day proclamation: —

The White House

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Since the Pilgrims observed the initial Thanksgiving holiday in 1621, this occasion has served as a singular expression of the transcending spiritual values that played an instrumental part in the founding of our country.

One hundred and twenty years ago, in the midst of a great and terrible civil conflict, President Lincoln formally proclaimed a national day of thanksgiving to remind those "insensible to the ever-watchful providence of Almighty God" of this nation's bounty and greatness. Several days after the dedication of the Gettysburg battlefield, the United States celebrated its first national Thanksgiving. Every year since then, our nation has faithfully continued this tradition. The time has come once again to proclaim a day of thanksgiving, an occasion for Americans to express gratitude to their God and their country.

In his remarks at Gettysburg, President Lincoln referred to ours as a nation "under God." We rejoice in the fact that, while we have maintained separate institutions of church and state over our 200 years of freedom, we have at the same time pre-

served reverence for spiritual beliefs. Although we are a pluralistic society, the giving of thanks can be a true bond of unity among our people. We can unite in gratitude for our individual freedoms and individual faiths. We can be united in gratitude for our nation's peace and prosperity when so many in this world have neither.

As was written in the first Thanksgiving proclamation 120 years ago, "No human counsel hath devised nor hath any mortal hand worked out these great things. They are the gracious gifts of the most high God." God has blessed America and her people, and it is appropriate we recognize this bounty.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Ronald Reagan, President of the United States of America, in the spirit of the Pilgrims, President Lincoln and all succeeding Presidents, do hereby proclaim Thursday, Nov. 24, 1983, as a national day of Thanksgiving, and I call upon Americans to affirm this day of thanks by their prayers and their gratitude for the many blessings upon this land and its people.

RONALD REAGAN

PASTORAL PRAYER: November 20, 1983

FATHER GOD, YOUR HAND has touched our dust and given us the gift of life!

You have given us the sense of sight to see flowers and friends.

You have given us the sense of sound to hear words and wind.

You have given us the sense of touch to feel and to explore the world in which we live.

AWAKEN US, O LORD -

To the wonders of the world in which we live.

To the sights and the sounds of nature.

To the presence of those who surround us.

To the mysteries of life that we cannot fully comprehend.

To the simple joys that daily we can experience.

THEN WE CAN BECOME THANKFUL -

That we are alive.

That we can see, and hear and experience.

That we can think and remember.

That we can love and be loved.

That we can wonder and explore.

That we can pray and can praise You.

LORD, WE THANK YOU -

For being patient with us,

For not forgetting us when we forget You.

For loving and forgiving us.

For being here with us now - in our worship, in our fellowship,
in our service to others.

For music and singing that lift us,

For rest and leisure that refresh us,

For laughter and joy that renew us,

For those who understand us and help us to keep with it.

MOST OF ALL, WE THANK YOU for not withholding the blessings of life from us even though we take them for granted.

NOW TAKE US FROM OUR WORSHIP into the city where we can turn our words of thanksgiving into deeds of loving service for others.

KEEP US ALWAYS...close to the side of Christ, mindful of His values and always dependent on His Spirit.

For we would live, even as we pray, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

THANKSGIVING SUNDAY MESSAGE

INTRODUCTION And suddenly it's Thanksgiving! - drawing us back to our roots, reminding us of who we are and what a strange and wonderful journey we have come. You don't have to be descended from that brave little crew that arrived on the Mayflower in 1620 in order to celebrate Thanksgiving. For a little while on Thursday, we'll all be Pilgrims again - feasting, toasting and marveling that the Lord has brought us through another year.

DEVELOPMENT When the first settlers gathered to offer their thanks to the God who had protected them on the edge of a vast wilderness, they established anew on American shores a Thanksgiving tradition as old as Westerman man himself.

From Moses at the Red Sea to Jesus preparing to feed the multitudes, the Scriptures summon us to words and deeds of gratitude, even before divine blessings are fully perceived.

From Washington kneeling at Valley Forge to the prayer of an astronaut circling the moon, our own history repeats that summons and proves its practicality.

Today, in an age of too much fashionable despair, the world more than ever needs to hear America's perennial harvest message,

"Take heart! Give thanks. To see clearly about us is to rejoice, and to rejoice is to worship the Father of us all; and to worship Him is to receive more blessings still."

Truly our cup runs over with the bounty of God - our lives, our liberties, and our loved ones; our worldly goods and our spiritual heritage; the beauty of our land, the breadth of our horizons, and the promise of peace that crowns it all. For all of this, let us give thanks.

SPIRIT OF SHARING Since 1621, the people of this country have gathered each year to celebrate with a feast their good fortune in their continuing ability to provide for families and friends.

As we approach Thanksgiving Day, we reaffirm again our faith in our heritage of freedom and our spirit of sharing.

While God has provided us with fertile lands and bountiful harvests, other nations and peoples have not been so favored. Each year growing food supplies give us greater cause for giving thanks, yet one person in six still suffers from chronic hunger and malnutrition. There are hungry and hurting people in our own land and in our own city. Some are to be found huddled in dark doorways and in the shadows of the buildings where you and I live.

We are called to practice "thankful-giving" in our celebrations, remembering those who are hurting and hungry, remembering them in tangible ways.

This year, in the midst of plenty, we still face serious problems and massive challenges. In giving thanks for the many things we hold dear, let us also pray for the courage, the resourcefulness and sense of purpose we will need to continue America's saga of progress and to be worthy heirs of the Pilgrim spirit. May we, too, find the strength and vision to leave behind us a better world and an example that will inspire future generations to new achievements.

PROCLAMATIONS Over the years I have made a practice of clipping and filing the various Presidential Thanksgiving Proclamations. Some, I feel, are quite good. But running through them all is a deep appreciation of the spiritual values that played a part in the founding of our country and a feeling that God has blessed this land and this people in wonderful ways.

We need to come back to this appreciation and this feeling. For us, it begins here.

Let me conclude this message by reading to you this year's Thanksgiving Presidential Proclamation. We shall follow it with a minute of quiet prayer and then join in singing what happens to be one of my favorite hymns of this Thanksgiving Season.

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For not forgetting us when we forget You.
For loving and forgiving us.
For being with us now.

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For rest and leisure.
For laughter and joy.
For those who understand.

MOST OF ALL, WE THANK YOU FOR NOT withholding the blessings of life from us even though we take them for granted.

TAKE US FROM OUR WORSHIP into the world where we turn words of thanksgiving into deeds of loving service.

All of this in the name and spirit of Christ.

"And all things...whatsoever you shall ask in prayer,
believing...you shall receive. And as many as touched
Him were made whole!"

"Wait on the Lord. Be of good course and He shall
strengthen thine heart. For we dwell in the shelter of
the Almighty. He is our refuge and our strength."

"We know that in everything, God works together for good
with those who love Him!"

"But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength.
They shall mount up with wings as eagles. They shall run
and not be weary. They shall walk and not faint".

"God so love the world that He gave His only Son, that who-
soever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting
life".

"Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits:
who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy
diseases!".

"Thou wilt keep Him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on
Thee: because he trusteth in thee".

"In the name of Jesus Christ, I share with you the Good News:
We are forgiven".

PRAYERS / LORD'S PRAYER

O Thou, who hearest prayer, hear our prayers...for
others, as well as for ourselves. Touch with
healing, O God...Father of us all, those whom we mention in our prayers this hour:

1. Elizabeth McCaddin, sister of Carolyn Broones.
3. William Brown, father of Bud; Phyllis Gardner, mother of Bob Gardner. Laraine Balk, Heidi Rabowsky,
4. Sharon, Schaffield, daughter of Michael. Helen Breit. Daisy Herrick. Maude Barnet

...beloved members and friends of this congregation. Comfort the bereaved and
the broken hearted among us...and especially be close to _____ who in recent
days has lost a loved one. Abide among us as a healing benediction. Heal each of
us at the point of our deepest need.

Answer the upspoken prayers now offered to thee on the altars of our
hearts, spoken in the name and spirit of Jesus, who taught us to say when we pray....
For we ask all of this in the powerful name and lifting spirit of Jesus who taught
us to say when we pray...

"Our Father, who art in heaven. Hallowed be Thy name. Thy
Kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in
heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not
into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for Thine is the
Kingdom, and the Power and the glory, forever. Amen"

FIRST INTRODUCTION

The week of toil has ended. Our day of rest is at hand. May the rest and the quiet of this hour of worship refresh our inner life. And may it renew in all of us a sense of God's holy and abiding Presence.

In silence, let each now pray as the heart may prompt.

SECOND INTRODUCTION

Remaining in a prayerful spirit, let us enter now into a time of silent meditation....a time in which we prepare ourselves expectantly...that the Spirit of the living God may be made real to us in this hour of worship.

In quietness, let each now pray as the heart may prompt.

THIRD INTRODUCTION

Remaining in a prayerful spirit, let us enter into a time of silent meditation as we come into the Presence of Him whom our faith declares to be the Source of all life and love, all peace and power, the Source of all hope and healing.

In silence, let each now pray as the heart may prompt.

FOURTH INTRODUCTION

Remaining in a prayerful spirit, let us enter now into a time of silent meditation. In these moments, let us ponder the pattern our lives have been weaving as we come into the Presence of Him whom our Faith declares to be the Source of all life and love, all peace and power, the Source of all hope and healing.

In silence, let each now pray as the heart may prompt.

MEDITATION

We rest our hearts in the Promise of Jesus who said:

"Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of Me, for My yoke is easy and My burden is light".

"Ask, and it will be given you. Seek and you will find. Knock, and it will be open unto you."

"I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to the Father, but by Me. If you love Me, you will keep my commandments"

"For I tell you...do not be anxious about your life, what you shall eat...or drink...nor about your body, what you shall put on. Is not life more than food? And the body more than raiment."

"But seek ye first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things shall be yours as well."

"For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present...to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature - shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, Our Lord."

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Sunday, November 20, 1988

I. GREETING TO THE VISITORS

- A. We greet the visitors in the congregation...delighted to have you with us...and hope that the opportunity will be ours...
- B. Take a moment to fill out a visitor card...or to sign a Guest Book. Join us in worship on other Sundays...work with us in the programs of service.
- C. You worship in a Church whose roots are deep in the soil celebrating 151 years...fourth building...neighborhood Church. We minister in the name of Christ and it is in

II. PARISH CONCERNS

- A. Review them on your own....let me highlight one or two of the parish concerns...
- B. New members to be received in early December. Persons interested in strengthening a tie with the Church....to come to the "Conversations in Membership" - two weeks from this evening. That would be December 4th.
- C. Today is Dedication Sunday. A word regarding the Canvas. Invite John Simms to share with you "how we're doing"... Share in the Litany of Dedication following the doxology

III. CHURCH FAIR / A WORD OF THANKS

- A. To all who worked on the Church Fair and helped to make it "Thank you". To Jacqueline Notestine, a special word of thanks. Some special bargains remain...come downstairs after the coffee hour...make arrangements. Pecans on sale

IV. TODAY'S COFFEE HOUR

- A. In honor of new friends...will be held upstairs on third floor....climb the steps or take elevator.

V. OFFERING:

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O THOU who art with us in our restlessness as well as in our rest, help us in this call to prayer to find a gracious invitation to renewal.

WE FIND it in our hearts this day to thank Thee for mercies that have followed, yea preceded us, all our earthly days:

For seedtime and harvest and food enough;
For energies of mind and hand, and work to do;
For dead-end streets and U Turns made, and open roads that followed;
For critical interventions of the right friend, the right book, the right thought - at precisely the right time;
For the sheer wonder of our creation, preservation and redemption.
For stout promises and bright hopes that keep us thinking kindly of the future.

WITH mind and heart and strength - Yes, with all that is within us - we would praise Your holy name.

WE PRAY TODAY in support of the quiet people of our time who go on day by day rendering a needed service in a world that is loud and often unappreciative:

Visiting nurses, hospital orderlies, change-booth clerks.
Those who bus our dishes and clean our offices;
Those who care for the mentally disturbed,
Those who counsel the unemployed and the distressed.
Those who show up faithfully in our schools to teach and to show what love and concern can do - and take.

GRANT that a nation that lavishes its adulation on athletes and movie stars may yet recover sufficient sanity to know who its real heroes and heroines are.

HERE we sit, O God, hardly knowing who we are - yet sensing that we live in relation to a power higher and greater than ourselves.

Help us to love Thee - without losing ourselves the less.
Help us to serve Thee - without serving our world the less.

Console the frayed affections of all who cannot cope with change.
Steady the resolve of those who would lead us into new and untried ways.
Amplify the voices of those who speak the cause of peace, the cause of the poor and disadvantaged of our society.
And keep us all close to the side of Christ - mindful of His values and always dependent on His Spirit.

For we would live, even as we pray - through Jesus Christ our Lord.

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