

November 24, 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

If my memory serves me well, I remember Sister Catherine William telling us in fourth grade about the first Thanksgiving our pilgrim forefathers celebrated; it was in the midst of the most arduous times that the celebration was born as they came together to thank God for His blessings in the very midst of those times, fraught as they were then with the difficulties and challenges that inevitably accompany new beginnings.

There have been many difficult days in our past as a nation since then and we've always celebrated Thanksgiving in the midst of them. Thanksgiving after the assassination of JFK in 1963 comes to mind this morning. We felt numb with sorrow and shock.

We were not exaggerating when we began to call the first few months of this year, 2020, an *unprecedented time*, for indeed it was, not only here in our country but throughout the world. Now Thanksgiving is almost upon us and we have so much to thank God for. We have certainly been through the most difficult days as a parish together. Our office and school staff, our ushers and Knights of Columbus have worked heroically through it all.

Our Church never closed; Jesus was truly *Emmanuel*, "God With Us," right before us, there in The Most Blessed Sacrament every day, except that one sad Good Friday when we could not come to see Him or each other. But then came those glorious days of mid-May, the 15th, 16th, and 17th, and we were together with Christ at Mass again.

Now it's time to celebrate Thanksgiving again, together, *through Him, with Him, and in Him.*

I am happy and blessed to be your pastor. Remember, even though I cannot still see some of you, you are still with me, and I am with you, especially when I offer Mass. We are, and never cease to be, the Mystical Body of Christ. Thank God for that.

Now I send you my first Thanksgiving blessing through the air.

With kindest regards, I remain

Your most grateful pastor,

Father DeMartino