

Pastor's Thanksgiving Message



My Dear Friends:

*“Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth.
Worship the Lord with gladness; come into his presence with
singing.
Know that the Lord is God. It is he that made us, and we are
his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.
Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise.
Give thanks to him, bless his name.
For the Lord is good; his steadfast love endures for ever,
and his faithfulness to all generations” (Psalm 100).*

The 100th Psalm, which was written for the people of Israel, was a hymn that was sung while entering the temple, probably for a thanksgiving ceremony. Having been in a covenant relationship with each other, God had essentially said to the Israelites, “When you enter the Promised Land, which I have given you, and you settle in your homes, and have plenty to eat, do not forget me; do not forget the creator and giver. It was God who led them out of bondage in Egypt, through the wilderness and brought them to “a land flowing with milk and honey” (Exodus 3: 8).

However, it would appear that the people of Israel needed a reminder concerning how they had gotten there and I’m afraid that we need reminders time to time as well. It is interesting that although this psalm of thanksgiving was written for the Israelites, yet one would realize that it is also addressed to us. The first verse is addressed to “all the earth.” Everyone is expected to worship, give thanks and praise, and to realize whose we are. Furthermore, if we felt that the psalm was only addressed to the people of that time, the last verse tells us differently, for it includes “all generations” to come. In other words, my friends, thanksgiving is so important that it applies to every person of every generation who has and will ever live. Even in our dictionaries, the words, “thanks” and “thanksgiving” are associated with God. The Concise Oxford Dictionary defines “thanksgiving” as “expression of gratitude especially to God.”

The biggest “killer” of Thanksgiving, is the day after when the intensity of Christmas shopping begins and we stop thinking about what we have and start thinking about what we want. Many of us like to look at all the “neat stuff” we want instead of spending more time looking at the “neat stuff” we already have and thanking God for it. We tend to focus on what we want rather than rejoice in what we have. There’s a great paradox here: ‘We’re satisfied but yet we’re never satisfied.’

This is why Thanksgiving Day is so important each year. We need this reminder because it is meant to make us add up all that we have and to recognize where all that we enjoy actually come from. We need to be constantly reminded of what we have instead of wishing for what we want.

May we work harder at remembering to thank God for all of His blessings, not just once a year, but often, for the Lord is the basis for our giving thanks.

A Blessed Thanksgiving to all!

Your Friend and Pastor

Father Tony