

From the Pastor



We teach that we are not supposed to expect God to hand us our salvation on a silver platter. He gives us the grace but we need to cooperate with it. On the other hand some might think that people are supposed to earn their salvation by their own activity, their works. But this is not what Jesus and the Church is teaching us in that matter. It would be wrong to think that if we, for instance, pray a certain amount of Rosaries and light a certain amount of candles we will then deserve entrance into heaven. In fact, the idea that we can earn our own salvation has been formally condemned as a heresy - the heresy of Pelagianism. Pelagius, a fourth-century monk, thought we could overcome evil, temptation, and the damage of original sin just by our own efforts. And he was wrong; our efforts are useless without God's grace. We should always owe everything to God's gift of faith.

With the Thanksgiving Day approaching this week I would like to also mention great advice St. Paul gives us in his First letter to Thessalonians (5:14-18) - "Now we exhort you, brethren, warn those who are unruly, comfort the fainthearted, uphold the weak, be patient with all. See that no one renders evil for evil to anyone, but always pursue what is good both for yourselves and for all. Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you".

Thanksgiving Day will come and be gone as it is every year and that makes me a little sad because it's all about two of my favorite things: food and family; not necessarily in that order. We trace our celebration of Thanksgiving back to the 1621 Plymouth pilgrims who asked the colonists to join together for a time of fasting and feasting to celebrate a great harvest. How would you feel if you were told you couldn't feast until you had fasted? That would make everything taste just a little bit better, wouldn't it?

It's good to be thankful on the fourth Thursday of November each year but it's even better to live a life of thanksgiving. I actually do this every day - take a look at what I am thankful for and, if I can, still make my heart even more grateful. I don't think there is a limit to all the good things God is prepared to give us. Even though we don't receive them all at once we should always be ready to receive His new blessings and continually keep asking for them in our prayers.

I wish all of you a Happy Thanksgiving Day.

+ Father Roger