

Scripture Readings: [1 Thessalonians 1:1-5, 8-10](#) ✕ [Psalm 149:1-6, 9](#) ✕ [Matthew 23: 13-22](#)

As we just heard, our first reading today came to us from St. Paul's first letter to the Thessalonians. It is, in fact, the oldest Christian document in existence. It was written by St. Paul sometime around the year 50 AD, almost twenty years after the time of Jesus, and about twenty years before the first Gospel – that of St. Mark. St. Paul's letter begins on a note of joy and thanksgiving; St. Paul gives thanks to God for the Church of Thessalonica, for their love and faith and for their steadfastness of hope in Jesus.



The main theme throughout this letter is that of thanksgiving, because this is the basic attitude of people who trust in God, regardless of their circumstances in life.

Towards the end of the letter, St. Paul says to the people, “In all circumstances give thanks, for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus.”¹

Regardless of the circumstances in which we find ourselves at any given time, we always have reason to be thankful because of how God has blessed us in Christ Jesus. God has given us so much and we all have reasons to be grateful and, hopefully, we will find ourselves always able express our thanks to God, even in times of difficulty. ✕

¹ [1 Thessalonians 5:18](#)