



## *A word from Fr. Bill.....*

### *Happy Thanksgiving!*

Dear Parishioners:

Happy Thanksgiving! Please be assured that as I celebrate Thanksgiving on Thursday at the 10:00 AM Mass that you, our parishioners, will be foremost in my prayers of thanksgiving to our God. I will thank God for your witness of faith, especially for your regular participation in our liturgies and your generosity in so many ways of sharing your time, talents and treasures. We see this generosity in our liturgical ministers, our volunteers at Gift of Life, participants in our RCIA process, sacramental preparation programs, participants in various discussion groups, those who prepare for our socials after three of our weekend Masses, among other things. Please do not ever underestimate either the value of that witness or the encouragement it gives.

I will give thanks for all of our staff members. At a recent gathering, I told them I could not do any of their jobs. We are extremely grateful to have such dedicated women and men, and I truly mean dedicated as well as competent. It involves answering the telephones and door bell, preparing the bulletin each week, keeping the website up to date, overseeing the use of our facilities, preparing the schedule for liturgical ministers, keeping the sacramental registers current. It involves overseeing all of our facilities, painting, carpentry, being the liaison to all of our vendors. It includes keeping our financial books up to date, paying our bills, and preparing financial reports and budgets. It includes overseeing all the details for the marriages of about 60 couples a year, as well as overseeing all their rehearsals and wedding ceremonies. It involves coordinating all the music for four Masses for 52 weekends, several concerts a year and directing two choirs including their rehearsals. It involves keeping the friary and church clean, and maybe the most important thing cooking for the Friars. It would be impossible for the parish to exist without them.

I will give thanks for the wonderful collaboration of the generous men and women who serve on the Parish Pastoral Council and Parish Finance Commission. There is very little that goes on in the pastoral or temporal life of the parish with which I do not consult them. They bring their experience and expertise in helping me to identify and respond to the pastoral needs of the parish, to oversee budgets, to make contractual agreements with vendors, to prepare for a capital campaign. I could not function as pastor without them.

I will offer special thanks on Thursday for my Augustinian community, Father Paul and Father Tony, who support me in my prayer life and who help me to be faithful to my vocation as an Augustinian. I am especially grateful to them, as they are not assigned to the parish, but they make it possible for me to take a day off, to take a vacation, to go on retreat, to participate in significant events in the life of my family and friends. There are many pastors who do not have the luxury of that support. This is high on my gratitude list on Thursday.

Hopefully, you will be able to join me on Thursday morning at 10:00 AM when we can all give thanks to God together.

Please find on the other side of this letter prayers which I encourage you to incorporate into your Thanksgiving dinner wherever you may be eating on Thursday.

Have a wonderful week and especially have a wonderful Thanksgiving.

Fr. Bill



## Prayer Before Thanksgiving Dinner

Almighty God, we thank you for all your goodness and loving kindness to us and to all people. You create us, keep us and bless us in this life. You showed your love for us, above all, by redeeming the world in Jesus Christ. You bring us to life in your grace and fill us with the hope of glory. Make us aware of all your gifts that we may truly appreciate them. We want to praise you not only with our lips but in our lives, by serving you and walking before you in kindness and justice each day of our lives, through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with you and the Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory, world without end. Amen.

*(Each person around the table mentions something for which I am grateful.)*

Our Father.....

## Blessing of the Food

Let us pray,

Lord, bless this good food, you have created that it may be a means of good health for all of us. Let us remember those in the world who are hungry and without food. Grant by calling upon your holy name that all of us who partake of this food may receive health of body and protection of soul. Through Christ our Lord. Amen



*"O my God, let me remember with gratitude and confess to thee thy mercies toward me." -St. Augustine of Hippo*