

Thanksgiving

There are two sets of propers for the morning and two for the evening. A homily is provided for Morning and Evening Prayer A. Others to be written.

Morning Prayer A

NOTE the canticle in place of the Venite, page 264

First Lesson: Deut 8:1-11, 17-20

Second Lesson: 1 Thes 5:12-23

Homily

This is a day of Thanksgiving.
of feasting, of rejoicing,
of enjoying families and being glad.

*"In every thing give thanks: " says St. Paul,
"for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus
concerning you."*

God has provided.
He has delivered us.
He will provide,
and He will deliver us,
but we haven't always felt thankful, have we?
There have been times
when we've only wanted to complain,
when things just didn't look good at all.

Well, is everything always wonderfully good?
Or do bad things happen,
sometimes to good people?
Sometimes they happen to us,
sometimes to others.
When it's others ti happens to,
should we always be all happy
about the good we have?
Or should we maybe be thinking about them?

*"... thou shalt remember all the way
which the LORD thy God led thee ..."*
said Moses.

How thankful do we feel
when we look at the hard times?
How grateful are we when we are corrected?

When we are made to go ways we do not desire
for our own good?
Do we choose to remember only the things we like?

*"... thou shalt remember all the way ...
all the way ...
which the LORD thy God led thee ..."
... to humble thee,
and to prove thee,
to know what was in thine heart,*

*whether thou wouldst
keep his commandments, or no.
And he humbled thee,
and suffered thee to hunger,
and fed thee with manna,
which thou knewest not,
neither did thy fathers know;
that he might make thee know
that man doth not live by bread only,
but by every word that proceedeth
out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live.*

On that first Thanksgiving Day in Plymouth
the pilgrims had just come out of a dreadful time,
They had nearly staved, barely survived,
but they had come through.
They had learned much.
They were not quite the same as before it all,
and now, when times were better,
they gave thanks,
not just that, finally they had what they needed,
but, more important,
that God had been with them in the hard times,
that He had given them strength to survive,
that, by His grace, they had lived
to see the good times.

"In every thing give thanks:

*"or this is the will of God in Christ Jesus
concerning you."*

Let us pray.

Most gracious God, by whose knowledge the depths
are broken up, and the clouds drop down the dew;
We yield thee unfeigned thanks and praise for the
return of seedtime and harvest, for the increase of the
ground and the gathering in of the fruits thereof, and
for all the other blessings of thy merciful providence
bestowed upon this nation and people. And, we
beseech thee, give us a just sense of these great
mercies; such as may appear in our lives by an
humble, holy, and obedient walking before thee all
our days; And make us mindful, merciful Lord, of
thy loving presence even in the hard times, and of
the word thou wouldst speak to us therein; through
Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with thee and the
Holy Ghost, be all glory and honour, world without
end. Amen.

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see also the sermon by Canon Hollister
under this date
in the Sermons by Other Authors

Thanksgiving

NOTE the canticle in place of the Venite, page 264

Morning Prayer B

First Lesson: Deut 26:1-11

Second Lesson: John 6:26-35

Homily to be written

Thanksgiving

Evening Prayer A

First Lesson: Is 12

Second Lesson: Phil 4:4-7

Homily

We all know the story.
 It was almost 400 years ago.
 That little band of religiously motivated settlers,
 the ones we call the Pilgrims,
 had survived -- barely -- a very hard winter.
 With the help of Indian friends,
 they had learned how to plant and to hunt
 in this new land.
 It was now harvest time.
 They had survived.
 They had prospered.
 They had ample provisions for the coming winter.
 Things looked good, at long last,
 and it was time to celebrate.

Yes, they did indeed have a great feast.
 They did eat and drink to their complete satisfaction
 Yes, they did express their gratefulness
 to the native friends who had helped them through
 (even though they did so soon forget that friendship)
 and entertained them at that banquet,

but that is not what is meant by Thanksgiving,
 and that was not the main event of that day.
 They gathered that day in their church,
 to give thanks to Almighty God,
 to hear a sermon about His great goodness,
 to pledge themselves to live thankfully
 before Him every day of their lives.

The happy enjoyment of His gifts
 was certainly a part of that celebration,
 but only part.

And the remembrance of His material blessings
 may have been at the top of their minds,
 but was not the only focus of their thoughts,
 nor should it be ours.
 There is more,
 and it is far greater.

This day we gather with families to feast.
 Our tables groan under the weight
 of all the beautiful food we put on them.
 We eat until we are satisfied,
 and perhaps a bit more than that,
 and it is only right that we should feast ,
 only proper that we should celebrate --
 our God desires that we rejoice in His mercy.

Some of us have gathered together
to tell God and one another
that we know the source of all our blessings,
that we are thankful to Him.

But what are we thanking Him for?
What is all this celebration really about?
What, in short, is most important to us?
Full bellies?
A good paycheck?
A pleasant time with family?
The society in which we live?

All these things are worthy causes for thanksgiving,
No one can doubt that.
To say otherwise
would be ungrateful in the extreme.
But is any of that the main reason we are here?
Or is there something more?

Those who chose the lessons we just heard
chose wisely indeed.

Isaiah, chapter 12
is a beautiful short hymn of thanksgiving,
with a very simple and profound focus:

“God, You were angry with me,

and I deserved it,
but You are angry no more,
instead You’re comforting me.”

By His mercy we can draw
water out of the wells of salvation.

We can cry out:
Praise the LORD,
we can
call upon his name,
declare his doings among the people,
and
make mention that his name is exalted.

Though His material blessings are important,
there is no mention here of any of them.
Instead we

Sing unto the LORD;
for he hath done excellent things: ...

We cry out and shout,
not so much because of these things,
but because He is in the midst of us.

St. Paul tells us to rejoice always --
always --

does that mean even when
we are short of what we think we need?

Yes, always!

He tells us not to worry about anything

Be careful for nothing;

but always to pray,
to let our requests be made known unto God.,
to trust Him,
to thank Him even before we see an answer,
and when we do so

*the peace of God,
which passeth all understanding,
shall keep our hearts and minds
through Christ Jesus.*

Let us pray.

O heavenly Father, who hast filled the world with
beauty; Open, we beseech thee, our eyes to behold
thy gracious hand in all thy works; that rejoicing in
thy whole creation, we may learn to serve thee with
gladness.

O most loving Father, who willest us to give thanks
for all things, to dread nothing but loss of thee, and

to cast our care upon thee, who carest for us,
Preserve us from faithless fears and worldly
anxieties, and grant that no clouds of this mortal life
may hide from us the light of that love which is
immortal, and which thou has manifested unto us in
the Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Thanksgiving

Evening Prayer B

First Lesson: Deut 11:8-21

Second Lesson: 1 Tim 6:6-16

Homily to be written