

An American's Thanksgiving Day Prayer

Thanksgiving is a special American holiday -- a holy day with a bittersweet history... for we recognize the irony associated with this remembrance day -- the fact that the good fortune of so many has been due to the contributions of others -- sometimes freely, sometimes not freely, given.

How can we reconcile the abundance of food, the fellowship of family and guests, the health and power of body and mind, and our joy and good feeling... with the enormous historical fabric of events, with so many tragic threads, that has led to this day?

None of us chooses the circumstance in which we enter this world;

*and so ... no child is guilty
of the sins of the parent;*

*but also ... no child deserves
its inheritance.*

*How are we, then, to properly be
thankful on such a day as this?*

We pray ...

Lord, I thank You for this special day, and for all the days You grant me ...
You have given me a canvas on which to paint
my contribution to Your picture of the Universe.

Lord, I thank You for this special meal, and all the meals You grant me ...
You provide me sustenance for my physical life;
You provide me sustenance for my intellectual life;
You provide me sustenance for my life in the society of men.

For all the many gifts of sustenance You provide me, O Lord, I am thankful.

Most of all, Lord, I thank You
for the gift of life itself --
for the opportunity to share in the work of Your continuing creation,
for the opportunity to learn,
for the opportunity to communicate,
for the opportunity to work with others,
for the opportunity to give and to receive,
for the opportunity to change the world ...
the physical world
the social world
and myself.

Lord, I remember the teaching:
*the only way I can really thank my parents
for all they have done for me
is to raise my own children well.*

I ask of You, Lord as I give thanks, the grace to see
how to make my best contribution to Your creation.

Amen.