



THE HOPE TO GIVE THANKS

Gratitude is a virtue that magnifies man. The ability to give thanks comes from recognizing the good, of all that is good, in what we are, have, and what happens to us. This virtue – this capacity – humanizes, magnifies, and makes happy the human being who is capable of such recognition. And, on the contrary, sad and unhappy is the human being who cannot open their senses to become aware of the existence of the good in their life.

To be able to give thanks is to be able to recognize ourselves as finite, limited, not self-sufficient but dependent, in need of others to live and coexist. So – at the same time – the attitude of the grateful human being is also a posture of solidarity and communion with others, life, the universe, and the Transcendent.

It is remarkable that a day dedicated to gratitude, thankfulness, and “giving thanks” has become the most important date of the year in the United States. It is the day that brings us all together and unites us, makes us all happy, identifies us as a human society and as a Nation, and one that we celebrate wholeheartedly.

That is why, also, on this very important and opportune day, we must reflect on what we celebrate on THANKSGIVING DAY and on the great issues that matter to us all, unite us, and make us a Nation.

Why do we give thanks? What reasons do we have to be thankful? Who do we thank? Why give thanks? These and other questions are implicit in our Thanksgiving national holiday, and they are questions that, if left unanswered and unresolved, reasonably and conveniently cause this celebration to lose its significance, truth, value, and meaning and, then, this and other celebrations run the risk of becoming routine, just another day, subject to the inertia of the calendar, a custom and a tradition devoid of their purpose.

Even though the event that gives rise to this holiday: the giving of thanks that the founders of this Homeland shared with the original inhabitants of these lands has become public, general, and national knowledge, the responsibility falls to us to update, renew, or find the meaning and significance that this celebration of THANKSGIVING has today, in our own ever-changing historical, political, social, and cultural circumstances. It is up to us to continue to celebrate this day, to continue to validly “give thanks.”

What personal, family, and social reasons do we have today to continue to be grateful? Are we building families and societies with reasons to be thankful? Are we building human communities in which everyone has reason to give thanks? The current historical moment in which the whole of humanity is immersed is difficult. Humanity is suffering. The issues that affect us all on a personal, family, social, national, international, and global level are very difficult.

We have witnessed pandemic and post-pandemic times of very high inflation, unemployment, and economic slowdown with serious risk of national and global recession, wars, and tragedies due to natural phenomena and climate change; times of important questioning of the phenomenon of globalization, of enormous political polarization here and in other latitudes; times of enormous waves of human migration across all corners of the earth, of the worldwide discrediting of political parties and religious and governmental institutions and of great injustices and inequities between

individuals, peoples, and nations. All of these generate new and serious forms of violence and death.

The national and global landscape, then, is not the most encouraging, and yet we continue to live because we are still waiting. The hope for better days is the engine of our existence and our personal and collective history. But each of us must give wings to HOPE, through our attitudes, deeds, words, and behaviors, we must make hope possible so that we make GRATITUDE possible. We must make good possible for all so that we make possible the THANKSGIVING FOR ALL. Amid hopelessness, hope must be reborn through the daily and effective actions of all so that we can give thanks.

May THANKSGIVING DAY be our annual and national celebration with truth, value, and meaning, but for this to happen, it depends on everyone and commits us all to build relationships and spaces of life, not death, that fill us with confidence in the future of this Homeland and humanity, to continue living and waiting, with sufficient and abundant reasons to live gratefully.

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