

Blessed

As Thanksgiving Day approaches, we begin to prepare for the inevitable question that is asked, and answered, around many tables that day: *what are you especially thankful for this year?* And I wonder, of course, why it's asked only annually. And why it's asked only in November. And why it's asked only at table. And why it's asked only among friends and family.

As People of God, we are perhaps more aware of our blessings. We certainly *give thanks* over meals, over children and grandchildren, over weather conditions we approve of, over sickness healed. Yet, I wonder, when we give thanks, if we feel "blessed." When and why we feel "blessed." When and why it seems that we recognize our "blessedness" only when things are going our way.

Paul wrote several letters to the church at Thessalonica and encouraged the people to "*give thanks in all things.*" Do you believe it's possible to give thanks for illness? Or for relationship struggles? Is it possible to give thanks while depressed? Or in the midst of bodily pain? And if we feel "blessed" when we believe that the Almighty is smiling on us, is it also possible to believe that we are "blessed" when it seems the Almighty is not?

I challenge us, this Thanksgiving holiday, to remember that we are blessed beyond comprehension by the God we serve. We are blessed when things are going smoothly, and we are blessed when struggles and pain overwhelm. God does not love only on sunny days. God does not abandon when storms are present. God loves all day, every day, in all things, for all reasons, in all circumstances, in all weather, in all places, all people, always. God is always moving, always working, always available, always protecting, always loving. How's *that* for being blessed? And when things are tough, God does not give up. Not on us, not on circumstances, not on growth, not on you.

Maybe the answer to this year's Thanksgiving question is, *I am thankful that in all circumstances, at all times, for all reasons, I am a blessed child of God!*" Then, believe it, and carry it with you until next November, too.

I am *blessed* to serve you.

Candice

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.
– *1 Thessalonians 5: 16-18*