

## Reflecting on Thanksgiving Day

It is one of God's precious gifts that in the midst of the most trying of times, we can experience the most intense feelings of gratitude. Even as the statistics mount on coronavirus deaths throughout the world, so many struggling for the air they need to live, we are grateful for each unencumbered breath we take. As social unrest and political division mount in our own country, we are grateful for the stabilizing presence of loved ones in our lives and the gift of being able to share with them the joy of the holidays. Though attending church services and gathering with others in our worshiping communities requires us to spatially distance and don a mask, we are grateful that it is our faith that continues to bring healing to hearts presently aching from separation and hope in God's mercy for a future together.

This is the message proclaimed to us in our readings on Thanksgiving Day. Sirach starts from the very beginning, blessing God for the miracle of life, for fostering the growth of each and every one of us from our mother's womb. St. Paul gives thanks for the other, for all the gifts of God bestowed on our sisters and brothers in Christ. Luke highlights the gift of healing, and the recognition of how it takes place in ourselves through the mercy of God. A powerful triad of thanksgiving. Thanksgiving for life itself. Thanksgiving for healthy relationships. Thanksgiving for faith in Jesus Christ that brings the healing that we need. In this time when it seems so much has been taken away from us, perhaps it is easier than we think to recognize all that we have for which to be thankful. Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. And bountiful Thanksgiving blessings on us all.

*Sir 50:22-24; Ps 138:1- 2a, 2bc-3, 4-5; 1 Cor: 1:3-9; Lk 17: 11-19*

*Cathy Lentz*

*Director of Adult Faith Formation*

*Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church*