

*"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, as in all wisdom you teach and admonish one another, singing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, in words or in deeds do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him." Colossians 3:15b-17*



My Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Thanksgiving Day is a special moment to reflect, remember, pray and give thanks to God for all the blessings we receive from God. I am so deeply thankful for blessing and the privilege to serve the Diocese of Salt Lake City, to have you as my partners in our mission of evangelization and to be a part of the faith life of God's people in Utah. The first nine months of my stay and pastoral ministry in our Diocese is filled with great joy, excitement and hope. Every time I celebrate the Holy Eucharist together with parishioners, students and faith community in the missions, I cannot help but feel with wonder the living expression of God's abiding presence in our midst. It is the Sacrament of unity that bonds our community together in thanksgiving for the gift of His Son and the salvation won through Christ's death and resurrection.

It is in this beautiful, joyful and holy celebration of thanksgiving that we bring our Church year to an end recognizing the Kingship of Christ our Lord and begin again our Advent journey to prepare our heart for the coming of our Lord in our heart. Our devotion to the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist reminds us of the spirit of our profound gratitude to our loving God who offers Himself to be our source of unity in building the Body of Christ.

God has blessed our Diocese and continue to be the beneficiary of His unending graciousness. Our parishes are gifted with dedicated priests, deacons, religious, pastoral and chancery staff and the many parishioners who have embraced the various ministries that build up our faith communities. Thanks to all for giving yourself to God and for the service of His people to make our local church vibrant and a sacrament of God's presence in the world. We appreciate your stewardship of time, talent and treasure. It is the Christian way to share what we have received with one another. Christ teaches us that the way to give thanks to God is by a life of faithful service. St. Teresa of Calcutta added that we are called not to be successful but to be faithful. So, let us continue to build the culture of encounter and engagement as we accompany each other in our spiritual pilgrimage. May we experience the presence of God, the source and fountain of joy that urges us to share the Good News to others as missionary disciples of Christ.

As we begin the new liturgical year and welcome the Advent Season to prepare for the coming of Christ and to celebrate the birthday of our Savior, let us unite our hearts in prayer and gratitude to be constantly faithful in our ministry and in humbly giving thanks to God. Please pray for me to be a humble and faithful shepherd.

Have a grace filled and Happy Thanksgiving!

Bishop Oscar Solis

November 22, 2017

