

*“A Thanksgiving Prayer
From The Iroquois (Seneca) People”*

In this week of Thanksgiving, I share with you a Native American Prayer:

“Gwa! Gwa! Gwa!
Now the time has come!
Hear us, Lord of the Sky!
We are here to speak the truth,
for you do not hear lies,
We are your children, Lord of the Sky.

Now begins the Gayant’ gogwus
This sacred fire and sacred tobacco
And through this smoke
We offer our prayers
We are your children, Lord of the Sky.

Now in the beginning of all things
You provided that we inherit your creation
You said: I shall make the earth
on which people shall live
And they shall look to the earth as their mother
And they shall say, ‘It is she who supports us.’

You said that we should always be thankful
For our earth and for each other
So it is that we are gathered here
We are your children, Lord of the Sky.

Now again the smoke rises
And again we offer prayers
You said that food should be placed beside us
And it should be ours in exchange for our labor.
You thought that ours should be a world
where green grass of many kinds should grow
You said that some should be medicines
And that one should be Ona’o
the sacred food, our sister corn
You gave to her two clinging sisters
beautiful Oa’gete, our sister beans
and bountiful Nyo’sowane, our sister squash
The three sacred sisters; they who sustain us.

This is what you thought, Lord of the Sky.
Thus did you think to provide for us
And you ordered that when the warm season comes,
That we should see the return of life
And remember you, and be thankful,
and gather here by the sacred fire.
So now again the smoke arises
We the people offer our prayers
We speak to you through the rising smoke
We are thankful, Lord of the Sky.”

*-(Liberally translated)
Chuck Larsen, Seneca
Taken from “Fourth World
Documentation Project”*

In this month of November, we have focused our attention on Stewardship - living lives of gratitude to God for all that we have and all that we are.

This coming Thursday, we celebrate the National Holiday of Thanksgiving. Hopefully, gratitude is not a seasonal “thing,” but a way of life for us.

Our lives as Catholics are based on the Eucharist. We are a Eucharistic people. The word Eucharist means “thanksgiving.” We begin and end each day with a prayer of gratitude for all that God has given and continues to give, if we are only aware!

As we wind our way to Thanksgiving, may it be a time that propels us to be a thankful people not only in season, but also all year long.

As you plan your calendars for Thanksgiving Day, I encourage you to begin your day with Eucharist here at the Church of St. Thomas More. Mass will be at 8:15AM on the upper level. The liturgy is early enough to afford families enough time to begin the day’s activities afterwards. What a great way to begin this day, as a family, by celebrating the Eucharist together with your Parish Family.

The collection taken up that day will be directed to the California State Firefighters’ Association Fund. Details regarding the purposes of this fund can be found elsewhere in the Bulletin.

Happy Thanksgiving!