

Notes from the Liturgist...

Make a U-Turn and Give Thanks!

November 2010 was my first time celebrating US-Thanksgiving. I am not familiar with what they do during the celebration so I just did what everyone does. Many friends invited me to a Thanksgiving dinner at their respective homes. In the morning of Thanksgiving Day, the church was almost filled like a Sunday Mass. They came to mass not because they have to, but because they want to. Thanksgiving isn't a day of obligation rather it is a day of opportunity...opportunity to give thanks...and years later I came to realize and appreciate the celebration more meaningfully.

The Gospel passage that they normally choose for this celebration is from the Gospel of Luke (Lk. 17:11-19), the Parable of the Ten Lepers, who were miraculously healed by Jesus during his journey towards Jerusalem. Towards the end of the Gospel passage, it says, only one came back to give thanks. The challenge for us is are we that one?

Thanksgiving is a celebration of an opportunity of thinking back or making a U-Turn and to give thanks to all the blessings that we received in the past and to give something in return. The word "thanks" is a very small word but full of meaning and touches everyone's heart.

In celebrating the Eucharistic Liturgy (The Mass), that is always a call of praise and thanksgiving. It is a call to return to the source of every blessing that we received, the God who gave his very Self for us. We are gathered around the altar of sacrifice as one family, as one community. We communicate; we share our stories through our responses at the Mass, i.e. when we sing and prayer and reflect and stand, it and kneel. Parallel to that, on the night of Thanksgiving, we are invited also to give thanks while gathered as families around the dinner table. We tell our stories of our past and share the hopes of our future. Even in the midst of the all the challenges, difficulties and struggles that we faced in our past, we really need to take a break, make our U-turn and give thanks.

WE ARE CALLED TO BE A PEOPLE OF THANKSGIVING...

HAPPY THANKSGIVING TO ONE AND ALL...

-Ace Tupasi