

Thanksgiving Day, 26 November 2020

I recently saw a cartoon depicting a turkey and the Grinch who stole Christmas. The Turkey said to the Grinch, "I'd like to hire you."

It looks like, COVID, not the Grinch, has stolen Thanksgiving.

Or, has it? As nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ, neither, can anything, nor anyone, separate us from the spirit of Thanksgiving.

In spite of all the challenges we now face because of the pandemic, we still have much to be thankful for, don't we?" The precious, though fragile gift of life, this very day, and the presence of one another, even virtually.

We will still remember and pray for those who will be missing from our tables. Although missing from our tables, they will never be missing from that special place they will always have within our hearts. It is there we continue to experience the gift of their loving presence.

It was the special gift of Jesus' healing presence, the 10 lepers in today's gospel experienced.

--However, only one leper realizing Jesus had made him clean, returned to thank Him.

--As the cleansed leper knelt before Jesus, he heard Jesus say to him, "Stand up and go, your faith has saved you."

Like that one leper who returned to thank Jesus, so do we on this Thanksgiving Day come to the Lord's Table to offer our Eucharist, our Thanksgiving, for our many gifts, especially for the gift of God's unconditional love for each one of us. A love we are to image in our daily lives as individuals and as a faith community.

St. Thomas Aquinas defines love as "to will the good of another."

In this sense, we might ask, how are we as a faith community loving others and therefore imaging God's love?

May I suggest, the work of our Sr. John Marie's Pantry and our St. Vincent de Paul conference in serving the poor and those in need, are good examples of imaging God's love.

Our sponsoring and supporting refugee families, such as the present families from El Salvador, is a good example of imaging God's love.

Our connecting with our new sister-parish in Ghana, Africa, is a good example of imaging God's love, on their part as well as ours.

Our striving through our many ministries to live out our parish mission statement "to strive to bring the community together to love, heal, and support one another as the people we are called to be in Christ," is a good example of imaging God's love.

And yes, wearing a mask, keeping social distance and frequently washing our hands, is a good example of imaging God's love.

On this Thanksgiving Day and on the days to follow, let us do our best to image God's unconditional love by having hearts that are truly open and inclusive.

Open our hearts, Lord. Help us to love like you. Open our hearts, Lord, help us to love.

Thanksgiving blessings to you all.

Fr. Manny