



Thanksgiving and Advent Message from Bishop Alberto Rojas

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Peace and well-being to you and your families. I want to wish everyone a blessed and happy Thanksgiving Day. This is my favorite American tradition when we are able to stop everything and focus our attention on gratitude to God and others for who we are and for all we have received. It is a wonderful time of togetherness and gratitude as we are able to gather with loved ones to enjoy a delicious meal and each other's company. God delights in these moments when we, His children, pause for a moment of rest and share each other's presence united in God's love. In a world full of busyness, polarization and division, it is important for us to reflect on and give thanks for the many ways that God blesses us and is present in each of us. Perhaps this year at your Thanksgiving dinner table you might want to take a moment for everyone to share aloud a particular blessing from God that they recognize in their lives.

Also, as we celebrate the holiday, let us not forget the many sisters and brothers in our communities who are experiencing hunger, homelessness and despair. We carry their suffering in solidarity, and we resolve not to be indifferent to their plight but to act with generosity for the Common Good all of us together.

For us as Catholic Christians the blessed days continue with the start of the Season of Advent on December 1. This is the beginning of our liturgical year as a Church, and we embark on a 34-day journey of hope and anticipation as we prepare our hearts and minds to celebrate the birth of Our Lord Jesus at Christmas. As we look around, we can tell that our society seems to get into the "holiday spirit" earlier and earlier. If we're not careful we might miss the waiting and contemplation of Advent. Let us be mindful of the real meaning of what we celebrate. Our hearts are always longing for the coming of the Lord Jesus in our lives. As Saint Augustin would say: "Lord, our hearts are restless until they rest in you." Let us prepare ourselves seriously to receive Him.

As they say, "good things come for those who wait."

Wishing you a Happy Thanksgiving and Blessed Advent Season.

In Christ's love,
Bishop Rojas