

The Prayer That Forgot to Ask

They asked me to say grace before the meal. I’ve said it a hundred times before — the practiced rhythm, the easy phrases. Bless this food. Bless these hands. Bless those who have none. But that night, the words caught in my throat. I could hear my own voice like it belonged to someone else — a voice that only ever asked. Bless. Help. Heal. Fix. Always reaching, never resting. Always demanding heaven do something different than what it already had. And I realized — I had forgotten how to simply say thank You. My chest tightened, shame mixing with something I couldn’t name. I looked at the table: chipped plates, instant potatoes, a room of weary faces lit by fluorescent light. Not abundance — not even comfort. But presence. Breath. Enough. So I stopped mid-prayer. The silence felt awkward, heavy. And then I whispered, “Thank You for what is.” That was it. No sermon. No petition. Just that. The room stayed quiet — but it wasn’t empty anymore. It was full, somehow. After the meal, a man I’d never seen before came up and said, “Best prayer I’ve heard in years.” I smiled, because it wasn’t really a prayer — not the kind that reaches upward. It was one that finally let go. And in that letting go, I felt something sacred settle into the ordinary. Like maybe gratitude isn’t what you say when life’s good — it’s what you whisper when it’s not, and you thank God anyway.

- RHYAN SCORPIO-RHYS

Another Thanksgiving is upon us and it is once again time to take a step back, reflect, and be thankful for all that was bestowed upon us this year. All the good, the bad, and the ugly that we experience shape our very beings; what we believe, how we act, and who we are. Every moment, every minute that passes by is a new experience for us that advances our souls and gets us one step closer to completing the test that is our lives here on Earth. There is never a point in time that is a waste. Even the days you’d consider to be a waste: the days where you did nothing, the days you slept through, the days you procrastinated despite having a boatload of work to accomplish. Each day is meaningful. Each day is a product of the life we’ve lived prior to it and is a factor for how we will live after it. So be thankful for the life you have. Be thankful for the opportunity God has given you to complete this test for the chance at rejoining Him in His Kingdom once again. Whether you spent your days from last Thanksgiving on the streets, or in a shelter, or in your own home, know that no day was without value. Know that God would never give you more problems than you can handle. Each problem you solve is a learning lesson that makes an even wiser soul and devoted disciple of Christ. Each quest you undergo and complete is a conquest by an indestructible soul, guided and protected by the Lord who gives us our strength. I know in times of turmoil it’s hard to remain faithful and optimistic, but remember it’s our faith in God that has kept us going all these years and it’s our faith that will push us forward to the finish line. Don’t lose faith now with so many more years to go. This Thanksgiving, remember everything the Lord has given you, both the blessings and the blights. Remember to be thankful for all that we are given because it’s all a part of a bigger picture. Let’s be grateful that God has given us an opportunity to be a part of it.

-JANE FARMER

THE MEAL WE ALL BEEN WAITING FOR

It’s that time again, that’s right it’s Thanksgiving Time! A lot of us are going to be consuming mucho food this holiday season. Remember one thing: before you slice that turkey, eat those mashed potatoes, dive into those collard greens, DON’T forget to say your grace, and give God THANKS. It is by God’s GRACE that we live in a country like AMERICA! This country is blessed with plenty. So, before you dig into that apple pie or ice cream, give God THANKS!!!!

Enjoy your Holiday.

- RODNEY WISE



STREET VOICES

St. Francis Breadline
Franciscan Bread for the Poor
COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

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If you have any content to share for our newsletter please see one of the breadline staff. **We are in need of content such as a poem, lyrics, writing, thoughts, questions, image of your artwork or anything uplifting or informative.** Anyone who contributes content for our newsletter will receive a \$10 gift card.

The St. Francis Breadline and this publication is made possible by the Our Lady of Guadalupe.

FRANCISCAN 360 IS OPEN!

WHAT: Case Management, Computer Access, Mailing Address

WHERE: 144 W. 32nd Street

WHEN: Monday - Thursday, 8:30am - 4pm
Scheduled appointments only on Friday from 9am - 4pm

WHO: All are welcome!

Good morning! In this special Thanksgiving edition of Street Voices, we are delighted to present writing from Jay Webb, Mercedes Daniels, Minister Cora Shaw, Jane Farmer, Rodney Wise, Caleb Thompson, Dominic, and Rhyan Scorpio-Rhys, complemented by artwork from Honesty and Anders. Take a moment to reach out to your loved ones and cherish the time spent in good company. Happy Thanksgiving!



1 THESSALONIANS 5:16-18

Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.

Be the first person to correctly answer all three trivia questions and win a gift card.

The first Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade didn’t feature balloons. What animals were used instead?

What was the name of the Native American who taught the Pilgrims how to cultivate corn and survive the winter?

Which U.S. president received the first informal “turkey pardon”?

Answers to last weeks trivia questions.

Who is the all-time leader in singles (3,215)? Answer: Pete Rose

Who is the all-time leader in doubles (309)? Answer: Tris Speaker

Who is the all time leader in triples (792)? Answer: Sam Crawford

Thanksgiving: The holiday of thanks and gratitude.



I am grateful for friends, family, and all that has blessed my life.

Many have TRIED to STRIKE me down but as an ORDAINED MINISTER with GOD helping me everyday, I canNOT be struck by those who seek to do great harm.

THIS will be SHORT so I can get into the newsletter.

Thanksgiving, AGAIN, my second favorite holiday AFTER Christmas, the most holiest holiday.

This year I’ll see if I can make it down to North Carolina for Thanksgiving with the family.

The demons in New York City have gotten too out of control.

- MINISTER CORA SHAW

That time of year already. The saying goes funny how time flies. Thanksgiving, in my opinion the greatest holiday we celebrate behind the meaning of Christmas to me. Especially the first time we start feeling really cold and knowing we are still alive. That we are someone. I take this holiday, this season and I self reflect. Do my self inventory and just take a breath and give thanks. Thus last year I'm not afraid to admit it was tough. The first time I was ready to tap out and give up. But it was also the year I've learned I'm not stronger than I thought I was and even the strong ones need help sometimes. I reached out and walked through doors I told myself I never wouldn't have to. Also it was the first time I uttered the words "can you help me, I need your help". Believe it or to my doubts I got a response and a hand was extended. So this Thanksgiving I just want to give thanks to myself for giving my self the courage to ask and accept help. Also to the people and the organizations that helped me and continue to do so in these tough times. I learned along my journey that it's nothing wrong extending your hand and let some great people help and pull you up. Happy Thanksgiving and once again thank you to everyone. *God Bless*

- JAE WEBB

“The Balance of Gratitude: The Ethan Heartley Story”

Ethan Hartley, a Manhattan businessman, lived for deals and deadlines. Thanksgiving was just another day — emails to clients, meetings, and endless work. Family dinners? He rarely made time, often missing the holiday altogether. One Thanksgiving, a sudden emergency at work pulled him into the office, ignoring calls from his parents, siblings, and children. Late that evening, as he glanced at a family photo on his desk — his parents laughing, his kids holding hands around a table — he felt a pang of regret. Business could vanish, but family endured, especially on a day meant for gratitude. He left the office and rushed home. His family welcomed him with laughter and warmth, the aroma of roasted turkey and pumpkin pie filling the air. Sitting at the Thanksgiving table, Ethan realized that gratitude wasn't in work, but in presence and love. From that day on, he balanced ambition with heart, knowing that no matter how high he climbed, family was the true foundation of life, and Thanksgiving was a reminder of that truth. He began to carry this lesson into every holiday, not just Thanksgiving. Meetings were still important, but he made time for dinner with his children, phone calls with his parents, and quiet moments with his spouse. Slowly, Ethan discovered that success was sweeter when shared, and that the true legacy he could leave wasn't in business deals, but in the love and memories he built with those who mattered most. That Thanksgiving became the turning point of his life — a day when he finally understood that giving thanks wasn't just about the meal on the table, but about cherishing the people around it. From that year forward, every Thanksgiving became a celebration of family, gratitude, and the lasting bonds that no workday could ever replace.

- CALEB THOMPSON

I love Thanksgiving. I'm from Panama where we don't celebrate Thanksgiving, but I've celebrated it quite a few times since I've been in the United States.

I've lived most of my time in the United States right here in New York City, but have spent some time in New Jersey and Georgia too where I've also celebrated Thanksgiving.

I love Thanksgiving food like turkey and stuffing and gravy and I love spending time with my family on the holiday.

My sons were raised in America so they always celebrate it every year and I usually go with them to celebrate Thanksgiving.

I wish a happy Thanksgiving to everyone this year!

- MERCEDES DANIELS



Orbiting the Void



The shuttle Pilgrim groaned, its hull scarred by a hundred chronological leaps. Elias gripped the worn controls, his knuckles white. Beside him, June stared out the viewport at the blue marble that was Earth, now choked by the Great Climate Barrier—a shimmering, deadly shield of orbital junk. “We have two minutes before the Chronal Buffer burns out, Elias,” June whispered, her voice tight. “No time for the past. We jump forward, now. Get us to the Orbiting Colonies.”

Elias nodded grimly. This wasn't the Thanksgiving they'd signed up for. They'd been on a simple trip to 20th-century New York for a slice of traditional pumpkin pie, only to find their return path shattered. Now, their only option was a desperate, multi-century forward jump into a dystopian future.

He punched in the coordinates: Year 2342, Space Station Harvest.

“I'm sorry, June,” he murmured. “No family, no firelight. Just metal and vacuum.”

She shook her head, pulling a small, dried turkey wishbone from her flight suit pocket. “Doesn't matter where we are, or what year it is. We're still together. That's the feast.” She broke the bone in half, holding out the larger piece. “Your turn to make the wish.”

A siren blared red, and the cabin plunged into darkness. The ship rattled violently.

“The buffer's failing! We're coming apart in the jump!” Elias yelled, wrestling with the controls.

June's eyes went wide, reflecting the emergency lights. “We're too early! We're going to materialize inside the Anti-Gravity Grid!”

The view from the cockpit turned into a dizzying swirl of stars and broken metal beams. Elias threw his arms around her as the Pilgrim screamed through time.

The ship slammed to an agonizing halt. The lights flickered back on. They had materialized.

Elias looked out. They weren't in the Harvest station. They were wedged, impossibly, between two vast, black slabs of titanium, floating silent in the void. An ancient, rusted sign on one slab read: EARTH ORBITAL DETENTION FACILITY.

And directly in front of their cockpit, hovering motionless, was a derelict, heavily armed patrol drone. Its single red eye began to pulse.

“June,” Elias breathed, “I think we just wished ourselves into a prison break.”

-DOMINIC



Drawing by Honesty



Artwork by Anders