

A View from the Pew

by Deacon Greg Kandra

Giving Thanks

Since it's that time of year again, I have been thinking lately of things I am thankful for. The list contains the usual suspects: my wife, my job, my health, my home. I'm thankful for my vocation, my faith, my parish, my friends. I'm thankful that God has a sense of humor and seems to tolerate my stupidity, and that He gives me lots of second, third and fourth chances.

But last weekend, a few other things occurred to me.

- I'm thankful for the smell of wet leaves on a November morning.
- I'm thankful for the sound of cars driving over damp roads, and rain against our window.
- I thank God, again and again, for Ben and Jerry.
- I find it impossible not to be grateful for toasted bagels and melting cream cheese. And coffee. Dunkin' Donuts coffee.
- And I'm eternally grateful that I have the kind of metabolism that tolerates those things, and that God in His wisdom imagined that religious vestments should cover up all our physical shortcomings.
- Thank God for baggy sweatshirts.

In fact, as I've gotten older, I've found other things to be grateful for.

- I'm grateful for elastic waistbands.
- Thank God for luggage with wheels.
- Thank God for elevators and escalators.
- Thank God for the remote control.
- Thank God for naps.

I am thankful for soft pillows and down comforters in the winter, and ceiling fans and air conditioners in the summer.

Did I mention Ben and Jerry?

When I count my blessings, I always include the blessing of laughter. So I thank God for Stephen Colbert, and Jon Stewart, and Groucho Marx and James Thurber and Tina Fey and the Muppets and the geniuses, all of them, at Pixar.

I thank God for taxi drivers who stop for people in the pouring rain and for the wise and polite ones who know where everything is and don't ask: "Douglaston? Is that in Brooklyn or Queens?"

I thank God for Google.

I'm thankful for plastic bags that won't break and cheap umbrellas that last and shoe laces that don't snap and Happy Meals that have really cool toys. (Don't tell my wife that I eat Happy Meals, okay?)

I give thanks as well for friends who are kind, neighbors who are tolerant, family members who are forgiving and parishioners who indulge me week after week, year after year, by reading these ramblings of mine. Thank you, thank you.

Really, there is so much we all have to give thanks for.

And I'm thankful for that, too.

Happy Thanksgiving!

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