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Thanksgiving.

When the priest walks back from the altar to the sacristy after mass, he recites the Benedicite, an open-armed, all-embracing song of praise and thanksgiving.

He exhorts all God's creatures--birds and fishes, whales and sharks, glaciers and tempests, hail and frost--to join in offering thanks to God.

That prayer of happy rejoicing and childlike trust expresses a spirit that is important. It is a spirit which makes an Eden of the commonplace realities of the world because it relates all things to God.

It is the spirit that changes the center of the universe from the Ego to the Creator, where the center belongs.

Nothing is profane or disjointed from God to one who, like St. Francis of Assisi, possesses the spirit of thanksgiving, because upon everything and in everything there is the constant image and breath of God.

The fearful, inbred person always asks, "Why give thanks for what?" Such a one does not appreciate because he is too selfish to remember, too proud to acknowledge, too puny to thank.

He is utterly unaware of the sanctity of thanksgiving.

Whatever I possess, of qualities of race, of family, of country, my health, my talent, all my opportunities, my life itself--is it not all God's treasure? If my days are penetrated with the fragrance of any virtue, is it not virtue "gone out from Him?" Is it not a relic of His light and love?

God stands before all good beginnings. He draws tears of contrition to my eyes. He thrills me at heroism and beauty and nobility. He speaks rich words of consolation and encouragement in all my concessions to His will.

All that has ever been good in my life has come from God. The memory of my past joys, is it not but a drawn-out colloquy, a hymn of thanksgiving?

But I live in the present. I am always in a hurry, breathless with wild desires and ambitions. If I do not reflect, my past is but a vanished dream, a lost happiness, a broken reality.

But if I reflect, I know that in Him all my past is kept for me. It is something consecrated, holy and divine.

May I recall often that God surrounds me on all sides, that nothing is ever lost to Him. Let me always realize that I have cost a God's redemption, and let me always forget my selfish interest, my stingy calculations, my false wisdom, and my immense stupidity.

Grant me to people my memory with divine images and to keep there the heavenly relics, the mysterious pledges of Your grace.

Make me understand that under me and behind me in all my undertakings there is still You, and that all the keys of my future are in Your hands.

Your faithful remembrance of Bulletin intentions creates a spiritual treasury upon which you yourself will some day be glad to draw.

PRAYERS: Ill, uncle of Dan Finn of Alumni; father of Tom McCarthy of Alumni.