



The Kids' Catholic Virginian

“Let the little children come to me” – Matthew 19:14

Thanksgiving: food, family ... and most importantly - faith!

For most people, Thanksgiving makes us think about food, family, and friends. No doubt, we should definitely be thankful for these things.

As Catholics – we don’t just **give thanks** once each year. Giving thanks to God – that’s what Catholics are all about! We say it out loud each time we go to Mass: **Thanks be to God!**

Eucharist, which is the True Presence of Jesus that we can receive at Mass, actually **means “thanksgiving”** – we’re thankful for the gift of Jesus in the Holy Eucharist.

Did you know that many experts in history agree that the first Thanksgiving actually happened 50 years before the one we hear about most often at Plymouth Rock? These historians say Thanksgiving started in America as a **Catholic celebration!**

Settlers from Spain arrived in St. Augustine, Florida, on September 8, 1565 (September 8 is also the birthday of the Blessed Virgin Mary!). Father Francisco Lopez was the chaplain onboard those Spanish ships and the first pastor of St. Augustine. The first thing he did when they arrived was **celebrate Mass** to thank God that they arrived safely after the long, hard voyage. Then, they shared a **meal of thanksgiving** with Native Americans from the Timucua tribe.

So yes – the first Thanksgiving began with a Catholic Mass!

That’s why it would be good for us to keep up that important tradition each Thanksgiving – and include Mass as part of the way we give thanks for all the blessings in our lives (Bishop Knestout explains it better on page 2).

Happy Thanksgiving! Thanks be to God!



This is the place: Father Francisco Lopez, one among four priests that landed with the Spanish at St. Augustine, wrote about the expedition’s men who would participate in that first festive Thanksgiving after their voyage: “They went ashore and were well-received by the Indians, who gave them a very large house of a cacique (limestone) which is on the riverbank. And then Captains Patiño and San Vicente, with strong industry and diligence, ordered a ditch and moat made around the house, with a rampart of earth.” The first altar was made of wood, and a large cross of wood was lifted toward the sky so that all the people could see it and celebrate their good fortune.



Ask the Bishop

Q. How do you become a bishop?

– Christian Angelone, 9, St. Bede, Williamsburg AND
– Silas Henderson, 8, Our Lady of Nazareth, Roanoke

A. If the pope needs another bishop, the apostolic nuncio (someone chosen by the pope to represent the Church in different countries since the pope cannot be everywhere in the world) starts asking cardinals and bishops for ideas on who they think would be a good bishop. The nuncio will research all the men on the list and present his top picks to the Vatican.

The Congregation for Bishops then presents its top choice to the pope. He can accept, pick another name off the list, or ask them to keep looking. Once the pope nominates someone, the nuncio will call and ask that man if he accepts. If he says yes, there’s a bunch of paperwork before he is ordained a bishop.

Q. What do you enjoy most about being a bishop? – Sania Shafi, 11, St. Michael the Archangel, Glen Allen

A. I really do enjoy everything about my life as a bishop! It’s a grace and blessing to serve the Church in any way, and I’m grateful for being called to serve as a bishop.

A highlight for me is celebrating confirmations throughout the diocese. Bishops usually spend a lot of time working at their desks – doing things like making decisions, having meetings, and dealing with money matters.

The sacrament of confirmation is a big, important moment when young people receive the grace of the Holy Spirit. There’s a unique joy for me to be with all of you in your parishes, and to see young people experience the fruits of the Holy Spirit in their lives!

Kids 12 and younger: make sure to check with your parent/guardian, then email Bishop Knestout [YOUR](mailto:AskTheBishop@catholicvirginian.org) question. AskTheBishop@catholicvirginian.org Include your full name, age, and home parish.