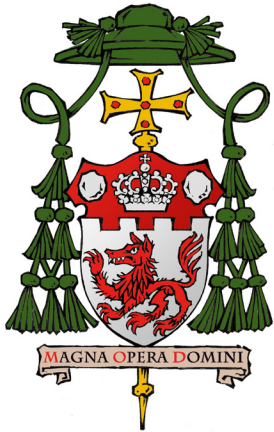


NOV. 24, 2016

*A Thanksgiving message from Most Rev. Steven J. Lopes*



**To be read at all Masses at OCSF Parishes/Parochial Communities on Thanksgiving Day in the U.S. (Nov. 24, 2016) and/or published by Pastors in their e-bulletins.**

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Every November, the United States celebrates Thanksgiving, marking a day when the earliest inhabitants of our nation expressed gratitude to God for the bounty that would ensure their survival through winter. In October, Canada celebrates a similar feast.

In the spirit of this Thanksgiving Day, I wish to express my deepest gratitude to God for each of you and for your abundant sacrifices and faithfulness to the communion of the Church and the truth of the Gospel. Because of you — through you — God is working a great grace for the Church.

Gratitude to God must surely be the cornerstone of our faith, particularly in the Ordinariate. This year alone we have experienced much to give thanks for — to say the least! Let us remember and be grateful for the ecumenical vision of Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, who reminded us that unity of faith allows for vibrant diversity in the expression of that faith. Let us give thanks for Pope Francis' extraordinary care for the Ordinariates, expressed through the approval of our new Missal and in his appointment of a bishop — all for the purpose of making our model of communion-in-diversity more concrete.

Through my 37 trips to parishes since February, I can say without hesitation that faith is strong among the people of our Ordinariate. I am humbled to know and serve each of you. On this day of Thanksgiving, I can think of no better prayer than to offer gratitude for each of you and your fidelity and service to the Lord. I pray you and your loved ones will be blessed with a joyful Thanksgiving Day and that during the holy season of Advent, we may continue to bring the Gospel to a world that needs Christ to be born in the hearts of all.

Sincerely in Christ,

*+ Bishop Steven J. Lopes*