

FR. CAMURATI'S CORNER

11/21/2021

It may not be who swiped a turkey leg or who forgot to bring the potatoes. But let's take a look at two Thanksgiving secrets:

1. Gratitude is a virtue that we can think is meant to have us go above and beyond. We strive to be thankful when it might be difficult to do so. We all experience occasions, or feel moods, when gratitude does not readily come to mind. This is true, but in traditional reckoning gratitude falls under the virtue of justice. Gratitude to God for the good He's done is called the virtue of religion. Gratitude to nation? Patriotism. Gratitude to parents? Piety. In each case, we can never fully repay in accord with the measure of good we've been given. But we're invited to try to add reverence to our side of the balance in acknowledgement of this fact. It's why we work to better our Country even as we respect her, and why we don't break into mockery when Grandpa breaks wind. Well, maybe not in front of him at least. While none of us are called to be doormats, our gratitude is less an extra and more of an essential. We owe it in justice. It's more like the apples in your apple pie than the whipped cream you might put on top of it.
2. Thanksgiving used to be preceded by three days of fasting. There are practical as well as spiritual reasons for this. If you go with less for three days, you can have more to eat on day 4. You might also be inclined to binge less, and your feasting will taste all the better. A bit of self restraint in the lead-up to turkey day might be a great observance for you and your loved ones. Moreover, this impulse is a very Catholic one. Easter is preceded by Lent. Even the "Seven fishes" of Christmas Eve fame are there because, by ancient custom, Catholics would abstain from meat on the Vigil of major holidays like Christmas. Going with a bit less on the 24th (23rd...22nd) makes the celebration really "pop" on the 25th!

I'll leave it here. No need to stuff this article like some might have stuffed their birds. And, to cover my bases, thank you for a lovely year.

In Christ,

Fr. Leo, O.P.