

Thanks Amid the Storms

In 1636, amid the darkness of the Thirty Years' War, a German pastor, Martin Rinkart, is said to have buried 5,000 of his parishioners in one year, an average of 15 a day. His parish was ravaged by war, death and economic disaster.

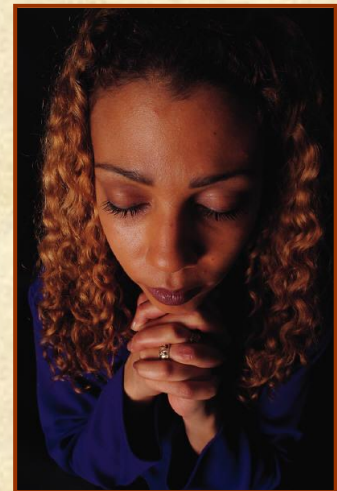
In the heart of that darkness, with the cries of fear outside his window, he sat down and wrote this table grace for his children:



*Now thank we all our God,
With heart and hands and voices;
Who wondrous things hath done,
In Whom His world rejoices.
Who, from our mother's arms,
Hath led us on our way
With countless gifts of love
And still is ours today.*

Here was a man who knew thanksgiving comes from love of God, not from outward circumstances.

We are entering the Thanksgiving weekend. Despite the adversity and challenges we may be facing in our personal lives – whether these may be financial concerns, anxiety over a health issue of a family member or friend, the heartbreak of a broken relationship – what are some gifts of love, signifying God's love for us and our love of Him, for which we should be thankful? Here are some:



- **Life itself.** The reason that we occupy space upon this earth is because of God's creative intention and His purposes for us.
- **Health.** No matter what the current state of our physical condition, we ought to acknowledge with gratitude our Lord's provisions for our well-being.
- **Family.** The basic unit of social order was planned by God for good reasons: comfort, support, nurture, encouragement, teaching and sharing of values. Be thankful to your Heavenly Father for your family.
- **Friends.** What is the worth of a good friend? It is beyond measure. This connection between two people involves mutual knowledge, esteem, affection and respect, along with rendering a degree of service in times of need or crisis. Praise God for genuine friends.



(more)

- **Work.** Labor was ordained of God even from the beginning, in the Garden of Eden, when Adam and Eve had chores to perform. God imparts unique abilities to each of us, and upon them we can build our careers. Discovering His plans for our lives in this regard can bring great personal rewards. I am grateful that the associates of Life Care and, Century Park have answered the Master's call to worship Him by taking care of His children. What a noble mission in which we are engaged!



- **Most of all, our intimate relationship with God,** enabled by trusting and receiving His Son as our Savior and Lord. Everything else in our lives – every choice, every decision, every action, every affiliation – pales by comparison. A walk with Jesus makes the path we travel sweeter every day.

These are among the many reasons we should offer our thanks and our praises to God – Thursday, this weekend, and every day of the year.

Hallelujah! We serve an awesome God.

– Beecher Hunter