

# 27 things I'm grateful for at Thanksgiving

Some years back, a book came out titled "14,000 Things to Be Happy About." This compendium of gratitude simply listed thousands of items - from ice cream sandwiches to extra-inning baseball games - that made the author thankful, and inspired others to reflect along similar lines.

At Thanksgiving, we often put our brains into gear reflecting on all we have. The song from the '70s musical "Godspell" comes to mind: "All good gifts around us come from heaven above." To kick-start your Thanksgiving reflection, allow me to share some of my gratitude journal, the things that make me happy and give thanks, mundane or otherwise.

I'm thankful...

... For the crunching sound leaves make when you walk through them on a fall day. For the colors of the leaves on the trees before they fall. For the fact I don't have to rake them.

... For trains that run on time. For cars that get great gas mileage. For good walking shoes.

... For old friends. For college friends with whom you've stayed in touch for decades and who know your history. For friends who have been with you through thick and thin and who love you anyway. For meeting up with high school friends after 30-plus years and reminiscing over the good ol' days when everyone was younger, had less worries, more hair (and the hair wasn't gray).

... For turkey with gravy. For apple pie (even the ones I don't make). For pumpkin pie. For sharing meals with family.

... For family. For siblings (all nine of you) who know who you really are and who are better friends now than when you lived in the same house or the same bedroom. For children (three amazing kids) who make me proud to be a dad. For a grandchild, and

that precious new life. For Mom and Dad ([Saint?] Therese and Harold of Hometown), rest in peace and pray for us. For my wife, who brings great love to my life.

... For a God who loves me, even when I mess up. For a God who loves me enough to not want me to mess up. For a God who loves me enough to challenge me to mess up less often. For a God who loves me enough to urge me to change my life when it needs to change. For a God who loves me enough to call me to follow him every day (even when I think I'm too busy). For a God who loves everyone else as passionately as he loves me.

I could go on, but that's my list. What's on your list? For what are you thankful? How do you express your gratitude? Take some time this Thanksgiving Day to make your own list.

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