

Thanksgiving leftovers with plenty of gratitude: 7 Quick Tastes

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How was your Thanksgiving? My father made an excellent turkey, yet again, my mother served up her incomparable pumpkin pie, and we had 12 for dinner.

It was all fun, and there is leftover pie for today. What more can anyone expect from Thanksgiving?

Besides the turkey, dressing, mashed potatoes, cranberry sauce, rolls, and gravy, we also have a yummy carrots and onions casserole my mother only makes once a year, peas, rutabaga, and sauerkraut.

This year we also had the turkey-shaped butter I contributed to the meal. I also brought back-up store-bought gravy and a homemade apple pie.



The sauerkraut is a German tradition in Baltimore, and the rutabaga that comes from my mother's New England roots.

Just listing it makes me feel stuffed all over again. But it was all delicious.

~2~

Before dessert, everyone shared what we were grateful for. My favorite was my 5-year-old nephew who said, "All the desserts in the whole world." It's hard to top that.

~3~



My younger brother who lives in New England came to town with his four children, and he brought a few Thanksgiving jokes along. My favorite one was:

Why did the cranberry sauce turn red?

Because it saw the turkey dressing.

It's funny even after explaining it to an 8- and 7-year-old who didn't know what dressing was or that people turn red when they are embarrassed or that it's embarrassing to see someone else dressing.

~4~

Eight years ago John and I spent our Thanksgiving alone packing for our first trip to China. I don't even remember whether we ate dinner. But it was just right. I always think of that year, as we scrambled to get everything packed and enjoyed just counting the days to when we would meet our little boy and become parents.

~5~

Black Friday seems to be calling to me this year, not because I'm looking for some great deals (though I wouldn't mind some) or because I love shopping (which I do), but because I seem to have done no Christmas shopping at all this year, and the shopping list is so long. I have a list of nieces and nephews to buy for, two sons who

are counting on a magical Christmas, and a family of seven we adopted for Christmas giving through our parish.

It's that family that has my attention right now. I keep rereading their family wish list. I hope we can do this well and that this will be a Christmas full of blessings for them.

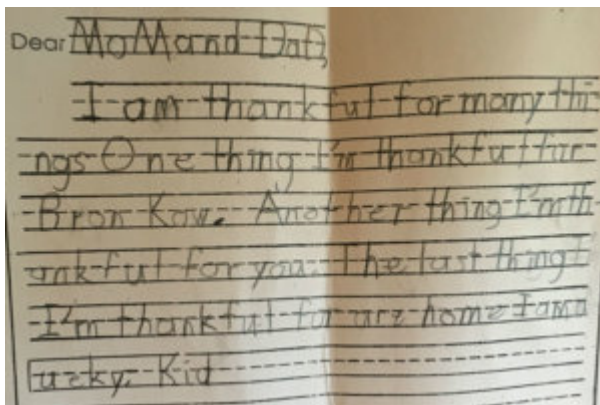
~6~

We are counting down to Daniel's first Reconciliation! We've been preparing and learning and using a beautiful book our parish gave us, Blessed. What I love the most is how it pulls us all into conversations about faith and renews the experience for each of us.

I remember doing the Reconciliation prep with Leo two years ago, and I don't recall anyone running to find the book so we could read it together. This has been such a positive experience.

And how amazing is it that our baby boy is going to be receiving this sacrament in just two weeks?

~7~



This note I found in Daniel's backpack is one I will treasure—and not as much because of what it says, which is so very sweet, but because it's so amazing to me how much he has overcome to be able to read and write as well as he does right now.

He's such a positive, determined child, and I often think that he is going to be so prepared for life because he is working so very hard to learn how to read. I'm very grateful for his school and the team of people who are supporting him and the team at the Loyola Clinical Centers who helped us figure out what was going on so we could take steps to help him succeed.

Every child has different talents and challenges, but being Daniel's parent is a wonderful reminder to me to celebrate every milestone as it comes and know life is not a race.

P.S. I don't know how well you can read the words, but if you're curious, "Bron Kow" is his brother's stuffed brown cow.

Now maybe we should each go run 7 quick miles—or take a long nap.

Read more quick takes at Kelly's blog, This Ain't the Lyceum, and have a wonderful weekend!