



# Thanksgiving 2026

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

As we prepare to celebrate our Church Thanksgiving Day on Sunday, October 4, let us enter this feast holding on to the same inspiring word that has carried us through this whole year: **“Do not be afraid; just believe”** (Mark 5:36).

Jairus heard those words standing between fear and faith. What he feared most seemed to have become reality, yet Jesus invited him to keep trusting in Him. His circumstances gave him every reason to be afraid; Jesus called him to hold on to faith.

Perhaps that is where Thanksgiving begins too: with trust.

Thanksgiving is easy when we can clearly see the blessings in our lives. But gratitude runs deeper than simply counting the things that have gone well. It begins with experiencing that, whatever our circumstances may be, God has drawn near to us. In Jesus Christ, He has given us what we could never earn or provide for ourselves. Christ has already done, on the cross, what no sacrifice of ours ever could. We are loved by God before we bring Him anything at all.

That changes the way we think about giving.

We do not give to earn God's favour. We do not give to prove our faith. And God does not need anything from us in return. Rather, when we reflect on what we have received from Him, gratitude naturally looks for a way to express itself.

This is at the heart of sacrifice. The Catechism describes sacrifice as a way of worshipping God, thanking Him, and submitting ourselves to Him (cf. CNAC 13.2). It means recognizing what God has entrusted to us and offering something of ourselves to Him in gratitude. Our financial offering is one expression of that sacrifice.

Scripture has long connected giving with trust in God. The firstfruits were brought to God not because He needed them, but because His people recognized where their blessings had come from (cf. Exodus 23:19). Jesus, too, spoke about giving, while continually drawing attention beyond the amount to the heart of the giver.

We see this in the widow who brought two small coins (Luke 21:1–4). Her offering could easily have gone unnoticed. But Jesus saw her. He saw not only what she gave, but the heart with which she gave it.

Our offering is one way we express our gratitude to God. The Catechism reminds us that a believer can also bring “a sacrifice in a broader sense, namely by devoting their own heart” (cf. CNAC 13.2.3). In this way, our gratitude can also shape how we give of ourselves—our time, our abilities, our attention, our care. It can be encouragement for someone who is struggling, a meal for someone who is alone, patience within our family, forgiveness that has been difficult to offer, or simply our willingness to be present when another person needs us.



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None of these things may seem extraordinary. Neither did two small coins.

Thanksgiving invites each of us to consider our own response to all that God has given us. What can I bring to Him in gratitude? How can that gratitude take shape in the way I live, give, and serve?

Our children can learn something beautiful when they see us live this way. They learn that gratitude is more than something we say, and that trust in God is more than something we profess. They see that the gifts God has given us are not only for ourselves. And they see how faith can shape the way we use our time, how we treat people, how we serve, how we share, and how we live.

This, after all, is part of our Church's mission: to cultivate a warm fellowship in which everyone can experience the love of God and the joy of serving Him and others.

So as October 4 draws near, let us recognize with gratitude all that God has given us. Trusting in Him, may that gratitude find expression—each in our own way—in what we offer to Him, in what we share with others, and in how we give of ourselves.

Together with the Apostles and Bishops across our district, we wish you and those you love a blessed and grateful Thanksgiving.

Warmly,

Arnaud Martig