

An American Thanksgiving

by **Reverend Sir Knight Donald C. Kerr**

For Americans, November is the season of Thanksgiving. It is a special time, different from what it is in other countries. It is an occasion to celebrate our patriotism. Implied also in that celebration is a heritage of religious significance.

George Washington for example, in the darkest days of The Revolutionary War, has been reported to have been on his knees in prayer.

Our money likewise carries the inscription, "In God We Trust." In that famous document, The Declaration of Independence, we can read, "All men are created equal; they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights."

In 1777, the Second Continental Congress declared, "It is the indispensable duty of all men to adore the superintending providence of Almighty God." A year later, Benjamin Franklin addressed the Continental Congress, saying, "Gentlemen, I have lived a long time and am convinced God governs the affairs of men."

Thomas Jefferson would confess that God had given freedom to the human mind, and in 1861, Abraham Lincoln, before leaving Springfield, Illinois said, "Without the assistance of the Divine Being, I cannot succeed. With that assurance I cannot fail."

When Dwight Eisenhower was President, he said, "Our form of government has no sense unless it is founded in a deeply religious faith." Likewise, did John F. Kennedy say, "God's work must truly be our own." Such is the religious and patriotic heritage that we celebrate on Thanksgiving. Therefore, let us be ever grateful!

The Reverend Sir Knight Donald C. Kerr, a member of Beauseant Commandery No. 8, Baltimore, MD, is Pastor-emeritus of the Roland Park Presbyterian Church in Baltimore. He resides at 700 John Ringling Boulevard, Apt. E202, Sarasota, FL 34236-1586

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