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**PRESIDENTIAL THANKSGIVING PROCLAMATIONS**  
**1970-1979: Richard Nixon,**  
**Gerald R. Ford, Jimmy Carter**

**PROCLAMATION 4021 THANKSGIVING DAY, 1970**

**BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, A PROCLAMATION**

In 1863 Abraham Lincoln, the 16<sup>th</sup> President, lifted the downcast view of a war-weary Nation to see the evidence of God's bounty. He proclaimed a day of Thanksgiving to be observed by each American in his own way. President Lincoln wisely knew that a man's declaration of his gratitude to God is, in itself, an act which strengthens the thanksgiver because it renews his own realization of his relationship to his God.

As thanksgiving enriches the individual it must bless his home, community and his country. It is, therefore, appropriate that we set aside such a day this year. All about us, doubts and fears threaten our faith in the principles which are the fiber of our society; we are called upon to prove their truth once again. Such challenges must be seen as opportunities for proof of these verities; such proof can only strengthen our Nation.

Although some may see division, we give thanks that ours is one Nation, of many diverse people, living in unity under the precept *E Pluribus Unum*. The fulfillment of this national principle, every day, is our task and privilege;

Although some may only see strife, we give thanks that this Nation moves each day closer to peace for all its citizens and all the world;

And we give thanks for God's strength and guidance upon which we confidently rely today and every day.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RICHARD NIXON, President of the United States of America, in accordance with the wish of the Congress as expressed in Section 6103 of Title 5 of the United States Code, do hereby proclaim Thursday, November 26, 1970, as a day of national thanksgiving. I call upon all Americans to give thanks in homes and in places of worship for the many blessings our people enjoy.

We should not forget that for many older citizens, Thanksgiving Day may be less meaningful than it should be because it might be spent alone. For this reason I urge all public officials, voluntary organizations, private groups and families in every part of the country to welcome our senior citizens as special participants in their Thanksgiving Day festivities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this fifth day of November, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred seventy. and of the Independence of the United States of America the one hundred ninety-fifth.

**RICHARD NIXON**

**PROCLAMATION 4093 THANKSGIVING DAY, 1971**

**BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, A PROCLAMATION**

One of the splendid events which shape man's destiny occurred when a small band of people, believing in the essential sanctity of their own being, went in search of a land in which their individuality might be the highest national value, before any arbitrary limitation or duty placed upon

some men by the whim or design of others.

They went in search of a land where they might live out their own commitment to their own ideal of human freedom. In the purpose of their search, the human spirit found its ultimate definition, and in the product of their search, its ultimate expression. They found the land they sought, and it was a difficult land, but it was rich. With their sacrifices they brought forth its riches, and laid the foundation for a new nation.

But more than that, they revealed a new possibility for the expression of man's spirit. In the sure unfolding of that possibility man has begun to experience a world in which he may do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with his god forever.

For what those early settlers established, we give thanks in a way which began with them. In their first years on the hard cold edge of man's bright golden-dream, they were tried and their faith was tested. But when their bodies failed, their faith did not.

The stark simple words on a sarcophagus in a little village on the seacoast of Massachusetts tell the story well: "This monument marks the first burying-ground in Plymouth of the passengers of the Mayflower. Here, under cover of darkness, the fast dwindling company laid their dead; leveling the earth above them lest the Indians should learn how many were the graves."

Yet, because mankind was not created merely to survive, in the fact of all hardship and suffering, these men and women - and those of the other early settlements - prevailed. And the settlers gathered to give thanks for God's bounty, for the blessings of life itself, and for the freedom which they so cherished that no hardship could quench it. And now their heritage is ours.

What they dared to imagine for this land came to pass.

What they planted here prospered.

And for our heritage - a land rich with the bountiful blessings of God, and the freedom to enjoy those rich blessings - we give thanks to God Almighty in this time, and for all time.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RICHARD NIXON, President of the United States of America in accordance with the wish of the Congress as expressed in Section 6103 of Title 5 of the United States Code, do hereby proclaim Thursday, November 25, 1971, as a day of national thanksgiving. I call upon all Americans to share this day, to give thanks in homes and in places of worship for the many blessings our people enjoy, to welcome the elderly and less fortunate as special participants in this day's festivities and observances, thereby truly showing our gratitude to God by expressing and reflecting His love.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this fifth day of November, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred seventy-one, and of the Independence of the United States of America the one hundred ninety-sixth.

**RICHARD NIXON**

### **PROCLAMATION 4170 THANKSGIVING DAY, 1972**

#### **BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, A PROCLAMATION**

When the first settlers gathered to offer their thanks to the God who had protected them on the edge of a wilderness, they established anew on American shores a thanksgiving tradition as old as Western man himself.

From Moses at the Red Sea to Jesus preparing to feed the multitudes, the Scriptures summon us to words and deeds of gratitude, even before divine blessings are fully perceived. From Washington kneeling at Valley Forge to the prayer of an astronaut circling the moon, our own history repeats that summons and proves its practicality.

Today, in an age of too much fashionable despair, the world more than ever needs to hear America's perennial harvest message: "Take heart! Give thanks! To see clearly about us is to rejoice; and to rejoice is to worship the Father; and to worship Him is to receive more blessings still."

At this thanksgiving time our country can look back with special gratitude across the events of a year which has brought more progress toward lasting peace than any other year for a generation

past; and we can look forward with trust in Divine Providence toward the opportunities which peace will bring.

Truly our cup runs over with the bounty of God - our lives, our liberties, and our loved ones; our worldly goods and our spiritual heritage; the beauty of our land, the breadth of our horizons, and the promise of peace that crowns it all. For all of this, let us now humbly give thanks.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RICHARD NIXON, President of the United States of America in consonance with Section 6103 of Title 5 of the United States Code designating the fourth Thursday of November in each year as Thanksgiving Day, do hereby proclaim Thursday, November 23, 1972, as a day of national thanksgiving. I call upon all Americans to assemble in homes and places of worship on this day, to join in offering gratitude for the countless blessings our people enjoy, and to embrace the elderly and less fortunate as special celebrants in the day's events, loving them as we have been loved.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this seventeenth day of November, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred seventy-two, and of the Independence of the United States of America the one hundred ninety-seventh.

**RICHARD NIXON**

### **PROCLAMATION 4255, THANKSGIVING DAY, 1973**

#### **BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, A PROCLAMATION**

In the first Thanksgiving, man affirmed his determination to live in God's grace and to act in God's will on the shores of a new land of promise. In this Thanksgiving season we reaffirm that determination.

Time has not dimmed, not circumstance diminished the need for God's hand in all that America may justly endeavor. In times of trial and of triumph that single truth reasserts itself, and a people who have never bowed before men go gladly to their knees in submission to divine power, and in thanks for divine sustenance.

On this Thanksgiving Day we mark the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the tragic death of President John F. Kennedy. As we give thanks for the bounty and goodness of our land, therefore, let us also pause to reflect on President Kennedy's contributions to the life of this Nation we love so dearly.

Those who celebrated the first thanksgiving had endured hardship and loss, but they kept alive their hope and their faith. Throughout our history, each generation has endured hardship and loss, but our faith and trust in God's providence has remained undiminished. At this first thanksgiving in twelve years in which the United States will have been at peace, we see that God's grace also remain undiminished. For this we give thanks.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RICHARD NIXON, President of the United States of America, in accordance with the wish of the Congress as expressed in Section 6103 of Title 5 of the United States Code, do hereby proclaim Thursday, November 22, 1973, as a day of national thanksgiving, and concurrently, a day of prayer for the memory of John F. Kennedy. Let all Americans unite on this day, giving thanks for the manifold blessings vouchsafed our people, and inviting all of those less fortunate than ourselves to share in those blessings in God's name, for His sake, and for our own.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this sixteenth day of November, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred seventy-three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the one hundred ninety-eighth.

**RICHARD NIXON**

### **PROCLAMATION 4333, THANKSGIVING DAY, 1974**

#### **BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, A PROCLAMATION**

America and the world have changed enormously since the first thanksgiving 353 years ago. From a tiny coastal enclave on an untamed continent, we have grown into the mightiest, freest nation in human history. A civilization whose farthest reach was once the earth's uncharted seas has now

plumbed the secrets of outer space.

But the fundamental meaning of Thanksgiving still remains the same. It is a time when the differences of a diverse people are forgotten and all Americans join in giving thanks to God for the blessings we share - the blessings of freedom, opportunity and abundance that make America so unique.

This year, in the midst of plenty, we still face serious problems and massive challenges. In giving thanks for the many things we hold dear, let us also pray for the courage, resourcefulness and sense of purpose we will need to continue America's saga of progress, and to be worthy heirs of the Pilgrim spirit. May we, too, find the strength and vision to leave behind us a better world, and an example that will inspire future generations to new achievements.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GERALD R. FORD, President of the United States of America, in accordance with Section 6103 of Title 5 of the United States Code, do hereby proclaim Thursday, November 28, 1974, as a day of national thanksgiving.

I call upon all Americans to gather together in homes and places of worship on this date, to join in offering gratitude for the countless blessings our people enjoy, and to share with the elderly and the unfortunate this special day that brings us all closer together.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this eleventh day of November, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred seventy-four, and of the Independence of the United States of America the one hundred ninety-ninth.

**GERALD R. FORD**

#### **PROCLAMATION 4405, THANKSGIVING DAY, 1975**

#### **BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, A PROCLAMATION**

Two hundred years ago the frontier colonies of America braced for a long and determined conflict with the strongest military power in the world. The petition of our Founding Fathers for redress of their grievances had been rejected by King and Parliament, and the people of America began the struggle from which emerged this great Nation.

Our Nation is the oldest continuously surviving republic in the world. For 200 years our freedoms have been questioned, challenged, tested and reinforced. These freedoms have shaped our destiny and served as a beacon to other peoples. Our Nation draws its strength from people of every creed, of every color, of every race - native Americans and people from every nation in the world who for two centuries have come to share in the rewards and responsibilities of our American Republic.

On the eve of our 200<sup>th</sup> year, Thanksgiving Day should be a day of special reflection upon the qualities of heart, mind and character of the men and women who founded and built our great Nation. Let us join in giving thanks for our cultural pluralism. Let us celebrate our diversity and the great strengths that have come from sharing our traditions, our ideas, our resources, our hopes and our dreams. Let us be grateful that for 200 years our people have been dedicated to fulfilling the democratic ideal - dedicated to securing "liberty and justice for all."

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GERALD R. FORD, President of the United States of America, in accord with Section 6103 of Title 5 of the United States Code, do hereby proclaim Thursday, November 27, 1975, as a day of national thanksgiving.

Let each of us, in his own way, join in expressing personal gratitude for the blessings of liberty and peace we enjoy today. In so doing, let us reaffirm our belief in a dynamic spirit that will continue to nurture and guide us as we prepare to meet the challenge of our third century.

I call upon all Americans on this day to gather with family and friends in homes and places of worship and join in offering gratitude for this Nation's countless blessings. I ask that we share with our senior citizens and with those less fortunate than ourselves this special day that brings us all closer together.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this fourth day of November, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred seventy-five, and of the Independence of the United States of America

the two hundredth.

**GERALD R. FORD**

**THANKSGIVING DAY, 1976**

**PROCLAMATION 4474. October 25, 1976.**

**BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, A PROCLAMATION**

Traditionally, Americans have set aside a special day to express their gratitude to the Almighty for the blessings of liberty, peace and plenty that have been bestowed upon a grateful Nation.

The early settlers of this land possessed an unconquerable spirit and a reliance on Divine Providence that remains a part of the American character. That reliance, coupled with a belief in ourselves and a love of individual freedom, has brought this nation through two centuries of progress and kept us strong.

As we cross the threshold into our third century as a sovereign and independent Nation, it is especially appropriate that we reaffirm our trust in Him and express our gratitude for the unity, freedom and renewed sense of national pride we enjoy today.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GERALD R. FORD, President of the United States of America, in accord with Section 6103 of Title 5 of the United States Code, do hereby proclaim Thursday, November 25, 1976, as a day of national thanksgiving. I call upon all Americans to join on that day with their friends and families in homes and places of worship throughout the land to offer thanks for the blessings we enjoy.

Let each of us resolve this Thanksgiving Day to make the coming year one in which our every deed will reflect our constant gratitude to God. Let us set a standard of honor, justice, and charity against which all the years of our third century may be measured.

Let us make this Thanksgiving a truly special one.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-fifth day of October, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred seventy-six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and first.

**GERALD R. FORD**

**THANKSGIVING DAY, 1977**

**PROCLAMATION 4537. November 11, 1977.**

**BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, A PROCLAMATION**

Although the first years of America's struggle for independence were often disheartening, our forebears never lost faith in the Creator, in their cause, or in themselves. Upon learning of the American victory at Saratoga in 1777, Samuel Adams composed the first National Thanksgiving proclamation, and the Continental Congress called upon the governors of every state to designate a day when all Americans could join together and express their gratitude for God's providence "with united hearts." By their actions they extended a revered regional custom into a national tradition.

Precisely two centuries have now passed since that time. We have tamed a continent, established institutions dedicated to protecting our liberties, and secured a place of leadership among nations. But we have never lost sight of the principles upon which our Nation was founded. For that reason we can look to the future with hope and confidence.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, JIMMY CARTER, President of the United States of America, in accord with Section 6103 of Title 5 of the United States Code, do hereby proclaim Thursday, November 24, 1977, as Thanksgiving Day. I ask all Americans to gather on that day with their families and neighbors in their homes and in their houses of worship to give thanks for the blessings Almighty God has bestowed upon us.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this eleventh day of November, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred seventy-seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and second.

## **JIMMY CARTER**

### **THANKSGIVING DAY, 1978**

**PROCLAMATION 4607. October 20, 1978.**

#### **BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, A PROCLAMATION**

Since 1621, the people of this country have gathered each year to celebrate with a feast their good fortune in their continuing ability to provide for families and friends.

On this Thanksgiving Day, we reaffirm our faith in our heritage of freedom, and our spirit of sharing. In the spirit of Thanksgiving, Americans humbly recognize how fortunate we are to be strong - as individuals, and as a nation. It is that strength which allows us to display compassion for those around the world who face difficulties that our forefathers, blessed with the American land, were able to overcome.

While Providence has provided Americans with fertile land and bountiful harvests, other nations and peoples have not been so favored. Each year growing food supplies give us greater cause for giving thanks, yet one person in six worldwide still suffers from chronic hunger and malnutrition. Two hundred years ago the Continental Congress proclaimed a day of thanks, and asked for deliverance from war. This year, let us observe Thanksgiving in the spirit of peace and sharing, by declaring it a day of Thankful Giving, a day upon which the American people share their plenty with the hungry of other lands.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, JIMMY CARTER, President of the United States of America, in accordance with Section 6103 of Title 5 of the United States Code, do hereby proclaim Thursday, the 23<sup>rd</sup> of November, 1978, as Thanksgiving Day.

I call upon the Governors, Mayors, and all other State and local officials to broaden the observance of Thanksgiving to include the practice of Thankful giving in their celebration, inviting Americans to share with those abroad who suffer from hunger.

I call upon the American people to make personal donations to religious or secular charities to combat chronic hunger and malnutrition, and to support the concept of Thankful Giving in order that we may one day assure that no individual anywhere will suffer from hunger, and that we may move to a day of universal celebration in a more perfect community within our nation and around the world.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twentieth day of October, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred seventy-eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and third.

**JIMMY CARTER**

### **THANKSGIVING DAY, 1979**

**Proclamation 4693. September 28, 1979.**

#### **BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, A PROCLAMATION**

Thanksgiving Day was first celebrated in this land not in a moment of unbridled triumph, but in times of great adversity. The colonies of Massachusetts and Virginia had few material possessions to help them face the dangers of the wilderness. They had no certainty that the harvests for which they gave thanks would be sufficient to carry them through a long winter. Yet they gave thanks to God for what they had and for the hope of this new land.

In the darkest hour of the American Revolution, when the young Republic faced defeat by the strongest military power on Earth, our forefathers also saw fit to give thanks for their blessings. In the midst of a devastating Civil War, President Lincoln proclaimed a day to express gratitude for our "singular deliverances and blessings."

The ensuing years have multiplied our nation's blessings. We have been delivered from repeated perils, and we have been blessed with abundance beyond the imaginings of those who offered thanks in the chill of approaching winter more than three-and-one-half centuries ago.

Succeeding generations have broadened the freedom they cherished and the opportunity they

sought, and built a mighty nation on the strong foundations they laid. In this two hundred and fourth year of our independence, we have good reasons for gratitude: for liberty in a world where repression is common, for peace in a world of threats and terror and war, for a bounteous harvest in a world where hunger and despair still stalk much of mankind.

Like those who came before us, we come to give thanks for our singular deliverances and blessings, in a time of both danger and great promise. May we be thankful in proportion to that which we have received, trusting not in our wealth and comforts, but in the strength of our purpose, that all nations might be similarly blessed with liberty and abundance and live in peace.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, JIMMY CARTER, President of the United States of America, do proclaim Thursday, the 22<sup>nd</sup> of November, 1979 as Thanksgiving Day. I ask all American to give thanks on that day for the blessings Almighty God has bestowed upon us, and seek to be good steward of what we have received.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-eighth day of September, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred seventy-nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and fourth.

**JIMMY CARTER**