



# A season of thanks



## Expressing gratitude is good for you.

**AS I REFLECT** on the Thanksgiving season, I think about how thankful I am for my many nursing colleagues and their constant contributions to outstanding nursing education and practice. I'm also thankful that I chose nursing as my profession more than 35 years ago.

But the pressures of progress, both in nursing and in the world, often force us to act before we're ready or to speak before we've thought about what's appropriate to say. The news is full of examples of this reality. Our world seems to be revolving faster than ever with our fast food, fast internet, fast networking, and more.

That's one reason why it's important the United States continues to set aside one day every year for giving thanks. In some ways, the holiday forces us to stop a moment and slow down—if just for a little while—to sit around a table, share food, and tell stories. In my family's case, we take time to volunteer at a homeless shelter to cook and serve a meal.

I see so many examples of goodness happening around Thanksgiving, a day for giving thanks, not just a time for overeating and watching football on TV. My hope is that by writing about slowing down, giving thanks, and reflecting on the goodness of being a nurse, I help enhance your celebration of Thanksgiving.



### Gratitude will improve your life

Much has been written on the subject of gratitude, especially by psychologists. Consider gratitude a part of “wellness” therapy. According to the Reverend Dr. Mark D. Roberts, “Gratitude magnifies our experiences about the good things in life, enabling us to enjoy them more thoroughly. Gratitude also helps us to endure the hard things in life with dignity, perhaps even with humor.” The benefits of gratitude include happiness and stress and negativity reduction. Everyone wants those benefits!

So set aside some time this month to say “thank you” in whatever way is appropriate for you, and to whomever it's heartfelt. Expressing sincere gratitude can be one of life's greatest joys, but it's one we often pass up. So let me invite you—no, urge you—to take time to offer real expressions of gratitude. For your health and well-being, you'll be glad you did.

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### Selected reference

Roberts MD. Enjoying your Thanksgiving dinner twice. Patheos. November 2014. [bit.ly/2OoDOAY](http://bit.ly/2OoDOAY)