

BEST **Advent** EVER

# 'TIS *(almost)* THE SEASON

We prepare for everything we consider important in life. And that includes Christmas. We visit family and friends, bake cookies, decorate our trees, and shop for gifts until we're ready to drop.

This year, prepare for Christmas in a different way. Join our parish for BEST ADVENT EVER, a free email program from Dynamic Catholic that will help you slow down and focus on what matters most during the busy holiday season. Each day of Advent, you'll receive an email with:

- Short inspirational videos from Allen Hunt, Matthew Kelly, and the Dynamic Catholic team.
- Practical tips for your everyday life
- Real-life stories to encourage you in your faith journey

Plus, every Sunday during the program, you'll receive a thought-provoking video reflection that will help you understand how the Gospel relates to your own life.

To sign up, visit

[BestAdventEver.com/Christmas18](http://BestAdventEver.com/Christmas18)

 **Dynamic Catholic**

Add to your faith experience of the 2018 BEST ADVENT EVER program by joining the small group sessions.

- Wednesday, December 5, 12, and 19.
- 7:30 to 8:30 pm in the Hogan Room.

Please sign up in the Welcoming Area or just drop in to a session.

Hosted by Spiritual Life and Education, Lorraine Nichol, Team Leader

## Linking Thanksgiving with Christmas

By Father John

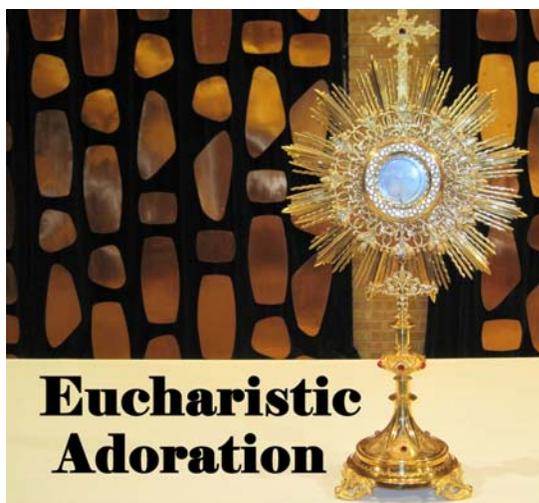


Our American neighbours celebrate Thanksgiving much closer to Christmas than we Canadians do. Climate perhaps has something to do with it. Ours coincides more with a month where the weather is still more autumnal and the harvest, whether it is in the fields or in our gardens, is normally winding up. A 'golden October' can certainly be a beautiful time to celebrate a Thanksgiving weekend.

Still, I'm a little bit envious of our neighbours to the south - perhaps in part because they are able to hold back on their Christmas advertising until 'Black Friday', the day after their Thanksgiving. Unlike us who witness the Christmas commercial hype beginning to build almost after Labour Day. However, perhaps a deeper reason may lay in the fact that while Christmas is a Christian event in its origins, Thanksgiving is a universally celebrated occasion no matter what faith tradition one may belong to - if any.

The common link here is GRATITUDE. No matter what our background, all of us have something to be thankful for. My brief experience of American Thanksgiving is that it is much more observed and ritualized than our Canadian version which is often just seen as a holiday long weekend. In looking for common bonds in our increasingly pluralistic society, perhaps we, as Canadians, need to take a more serious approach to our manner of observance especially in view of the fact that we are privileged to live in one of the most beautiful and blessed countries on the planet. Unfortunately, when we become so accustomed to the advantages of citizenship to the point of feeling entitled, we fall prey to what St. Ignatius Loyola called the greatest of all sin - ingratitude!

Those of us who claim to follow the Christian tradition may need to build a closer connection between Thanksgiving and Christmas since God has given all human beings the knowledge that we are brothers and sisters - children of the Creator. For that, every one of us needs to live our lives in the spirit of gratitude and thanksgiving. What a unifying and transforming state that would be for the whole human race!



This Advent, experience the closeness of Jesus in Eucharistic Adoration and receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Individual reconciliation is available during Adoration.

- Tuesday, December 4, 11, 18 after 7 pm Mass (7:30 – 8:30).
- Friday, December 7 after 8:30 am Mass (9 – 10).
- Saturday, December 8, 15, 22 (11 am – Noon).