

1 Timothy 2:1-4

23-24 November 2016

Day of National Thanksgiving

St. John's, Chicago, IL

In the Name of the Father and of the +Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

#NotMyPresident. Funny how St. Paul puts us in our place today for such thoughts.

In the past, you could typically take this for granted. We pray for **all** those in authority, no matter who they are. God has allowed them to come into office, and we give thanks, and pray for wisdom, health, and justice in their service.

Of course, in recent years it has almost become popular to challenge elections, to protest everything under the sun, and to cry and complain when things don't go our way. And that's people in **both** major parties! Not to mention other parties who don't even get taken seriously by many.

We often do not have the respect due to any of our government in this nation. We tend to have a little disdain or condescension in our voices as we say, "politicians," rather than referring to their particular offices. Not much thanksgiving going on there.

The problem for us really has nothing to do with political parties. It is about faith. And the way we treat people as we live out that faith. Are **you praying** daily for our leaders and all in authority? Are **you** intercessing for all men and women in public office, that they will serve for the good of all, defend the weak and innocent, and enable us to lead ***peaceful and quiet lives, godly and dignified in every way?***

Instead of pointing our fingers and criticizing our leaders, the Lord is reminding you today that it is **not** about how **they** have failed **you**. **You** have failed **them**. And you have failed the King of kings. Even if you pray for them, you have failed to be **completely** diligent in interceding for them. You are not being a perfect and holy citizen, living in peace with every other man, woman, and child. You are a poor, miserable citizen and sinner.

Of course, it is a blessing and a gift that we do not rely on these leaders for our spiritual well being. Their vocation is serving the people of our nation in this life, not saving us spiritually.

The Lord has seen to our salvation. Whether you pray with thanks often enough, or sincerely enough, He knows your needs and faithfully answers your prayer. He comes to you and blesses you with forgiveness and life. And He is precisely where He promises to be. He promises to bring His saving presence in the Word and water of Holy Baptism. He promises to bring His saving presence in the proclamation and absolution of His Word. He promises to bring His saving presence with His holy and precious Body and Blood. He brings forgiveness and salvation through these means! You receive. And you thank.

No need to make a pilgrimage to the ancient temple site to give that thanks; no need to stand outside the White House or Capitol to pray. From your home, this church, or wherever you are, the Lord hears your **supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgiving** for those in authority, as well as those "for all people according to their needs."

Rejoice, dear friends in Christ! In His mercy and grace, our Heavenly Father does not cry out #NotMyChildren. Instead, He gives His Son as the King of kings, suffered, died, and rose for you! And we are thankful that our dear Lord has called us to Himself in faith, and blessed us to know and recognize Him, precisely in the ways that He promises to come to us: in His Holy Word and precious Sacraments.

Look! Here He is! You have been cleansed in Holy Baptism. Jesus has given perfect thanks on your behalf. Now you are able to give thanks to God as you receive Him in His Body and Blood! Amen.