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A Thanksgiving Reflection

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Tuesday November 20, 2018

By Eric F. Spina

In my Thanksgiving message to the University of Dayton community, I reflect on why this holiday holds such meaning. It's about gratitude for life's simplest joys and greatest blessings.

Dear Students, Faculty, and Staff,

I love Thanksgiving because it is about gratitude. Gratitude for life's simplest joys and greatest blessings. It's about being thankful for each other.

Here is what's written in my heart this Thanksgiving:

I'm thankful for our **amazing students**, who are extraordinarily selfless throughout the year, and some of whom are feeding the hungry in our community before sitting down for Thanksgiving dinner with their own families. Our students collected food and donations and assembled nearly 500 Thanksgiving baskets for delivery last week to eight local agencies, who will in turn provide the meals to families in need.

I'm thankful for our ***committed and caring faculty, researchers, and staff*** who have dedicated their lives to advancing knowledge and helping students discover their vocation and fulfill their potential.

I'm thankful for the ***Marianist spirit of hospitality***, reflected in the outreach of our student organizations and living-learning communities — and in all the ways we bridge differences and strive to understand and respect each other. Two events this week illustrate that beautifully:

On the eve of Thanksgiving, the UD International Club, Red Scare, and athletics division will host a “Flyersgiving” dinner — a traditional holiday meal — for international students before the women’s basketball game at UD Arena. On Sunday, students from across the country and around the world gathered in the World Exchange Lounge in the Rike Center for a Thanksgiving potluck with some traditional American dishes, like turkey and mashed potatoes, and plenty of cultural ones, like spicy noodles from Thailand and rice and bean dishes from Latin America.

May our bonds of community continue to deepen — on campus, in our families, and across the globe. From our family to yours, Karen, Kaitlyn, Emery, and I wish each of you a blessed Thanksgiving filled with gratitude, joy, and peace.

Warmly,

Eric F. Spina
President