

Homemade Blessings

Dear Sisters in Christ,

Think back to a time when you were in college or away from home for an extended period of time. Thanksgiving is approaching and you can't wait to get home to the sweet smells of a Thanksgiving dinner. I can remember when I was in college, coming home on an icy cold November day and walking into my mom's steamy kitchen to the smell of a turkey in the oven, mashed potatoes boiling on the stove, the fragrant smell of dressing, sweet potatoes, oh and don't forget the green bean casserole. An assortment of pies would be decked out on the counter looking so delicious. This is the homemade blessing that St. Clara's Altar Society offered up to the students at Peru State College the Sunday before Thanksgiving.

Offering the PSC students a pre-Thanksgiving meal has become a tradition at our tiny Catholic Church. Also, almost all the parishioners attend along with fifteen or more students, making our small church basement burst with smiles and laughter!

As a mission church of St. Joseph in Auburn, we provide a welcoming place for the students to attend Mass on Sundays and partake in several meals provided by the Altar Society during the school year. This year during the first weeks of school we held an ice cream social. Two young girls came in and introduced themselves to me. I asked if there were a lot of students that planned to attend. They shyly said that they thought they were the only Catholic students on campus. They soon learned, as students started coming down the stairs, that they weren't alone. On that night we teased that it was all girls that showed up and asked where all the boys were. One of them replied they would make sure some of the boys also came to the next dinner.

Faith, family, and friends are all blessings that I treasure and thank God for during this season of giving. The families at St. Clara's enjoy being able to offer all three of these plus food to the PSC College students. It is one way that we as a church can reach out and share our faith.

I hope each of you had a blessed Thanksgiving and are preparing your hearts for Advent. Please plan to gather at the Winter Symposium in January.

In Christ's love,

Val Able, LDCCW President Elect