

A day of thanks

In times of economic upheaval and global unrest, calgary's religious leaders remind us what we need to be thankful for. compiled by mario toneguzzi, calgary herald; Rev. john pentland, hillhurst united church

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I believe Thanksgiving is not a day, but a way. It is a way of life.

We happen to celebrate Thanksgiving on a particular day, but it is really how we live. It's about how we embrace each day. I think it's really about gratitude.

Gratitude isn't something we can seek out or race to achieve. Rather, it happens to us, without our doing.

It is the feeling of awe we experience when we are caught off guard by the awesome wonder of life. Perhaps in nature, a sunset, or an autumn tree in full bloom.

It could be the miracle of birth, the mystery of death, the wonder of selfless acts, music that stirs us, or being wrapped in humility when we have received unconditional love or forgiveness.

These things evoke gratitude. True gratitude can't be forced or manipulated. However, we can cultivate it by slowing down, creating space to reflect, and by opening ourselves to the wonder that is in our midst. Gratitude is perhaps the greatest spiritual gift we can cultivate. It invites us to walk with humility and inspires us to give back without compulsion or guilt. Then, our eyes are opened to Divine surprises and we can experience Thanksgiving every day.

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Tomo Pidlisny, left, and Haruna Shimada, both 3, enjoy the fall colours in Stanley Park beside the Elbow River.

CLOSE WINDOW