



(Freedom from Want by artist and illustrator Norman Rockwell)

The story of the first Thanksgiving (Transcript)

Around 400 years ago, many people in England were unhappy because their king would not let them **pray** to God as they liked. The king said they must use the same **prayers** that he did, and if they refused, they were **persecuted**, imprisoned or even killed.

These English men left their homes and went **far off** to a country called Holland. In Holland they were happy but they were very poor. And when the children began to grow they became less **godlike** and did not want to pray anymore. After much talking and thinking, these English people decided to **embark** on a **pilgrimage** to the new world, America.

They **set out** on a small ship called the Mayflower to take them across the sea. There were about 100 people on board the **tiny** ship. It was **crowded**, cold and uncomfortable. The sea was **rough**. They were two months sailing over the Atlantic Ocean. At last the Mayflower came in sight of land.

The month was November and it was cold. There was nothing to be seen but snow, rocks and hard **bare** ground. They were tired and cold from their long journey, and hungry too. No one had enough food to eat. Many of them became sick and by springtime almost half of the people died.

In spring the sun shone brightly. The snow **melted** and the leaves and flowers began to emerge. Some friendly Indians have visited the pilgrims during the winter. One of the kind Indians was named Squanto. He stayed with the pilgrims and taught them how to plant their corn, peas, wheat and **barley** (*cebada*).

The summer came and the days were long and bright. The pilgrim children were very happy in their new home, Plymouth Rock. When it was autumn the fathers **gathered** the barley, wheat and corn that they had planted and found that it had grown so well that they would have quite enough for a long winter that was coming.

"*Let us thank God for it all*" they said. Then they decided to have a **grand** Thanksgiving party and invite the friendly Indians. They prepared wild ducks and geese and great wild turkeys. There was deer meet, bread and cakes. They had fish and clams from the sea nearby. The friendly Indians all came with their chief. They were dressed in deer skins and some of them had the **furry** coat of a wild cat hanging on their arm. Their long black hair fell **loose** on their shoulders and was **trimmed** with feathers or fox tails.

Before they ate, the pilgrims and the Indians thanked God together for all his goodness. And so the story goes of the first Thanksgiving celebrated in Plymouth colony nearly 400 years ago. As you sit down with your friends and family this Thanksgiving, remember this original tale and give thanks for all of Gods abundant **blessings**.