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## *Seeds of Thanks*

**An article for *The Cathedral Times* by the Very Rev. Sam Candler**

Like many of you, I usually begin my day with some type of prayer. It is not always formal prayer; I don't always haul out a prayer book or an electronic tablet. Like many of you, I also practice meditation and contemplation. I recommend such quietness and attentiveness in early morning prayers. Glorious things come into focus!

In these first weeks of November, 2022, our early mornings in Atlanta have been filled with wonderful wind and swirling leaves! This year, our autumn has been gloriously golden. How delightful it has been to let these falling leaves circle around us! Maybe these falling leaves are carrying messages to our souls, maybe like love letters. They are love letters from the passage of time. Time shows us again that beautiful things turn golden, and they fall, like these leaves. They fall into the earth to become nourishment for next spring. These swirling golden leaves are love letters from God.

One of the most satisfying of my morning prayer exercises is to try to find something to give thanks for. I try to cultivate thanks every morning. I let people come to my mind, and I try to give thanks for them. I let issues come to my mind, and I try to give thanks for them. I try to cultivate thanksgiving in the morning, even if I have to start with only a tiny bit of thanks.

Sometimes, it is difficult to find any seeds of thanks, among all the other briars and brambles grabbing at the soil of my soul. But there are usually some meager "thanks seeds" there. I keep searching. When I find such a seed, a seed of thanks, I caress it like it is a gemstone among all the duller things in the ground.

When I do hug that "thanks seed," it somehow warms to me. It might even shudder a tiny bit. It might even try to expand. The hands of my heart massage the seed some more, and, yes, it is growing. It even grows to become a part of my heart that day.

As Thanksgiving Day approaches, try that morning practice. Practice tending the seeds of thanks that might seem scattered at the beginning of the day. Perhaps they were left there overnight, by the Master Sower of Seeds, the one who comes in the night, the One who wrestles Jacob, and the One who overshadows Mary. The Holy One often comes at night.

As Thanksgiving Day approaches, try to give thanks even for the things that are falling, falling like golden leaves in their time. They will become new again, maybe in a new form. Cultivate these seeds of thanks, caress them, hug them, nurture them; and they will grow to fill your heart. Then, that thanksgiving will even grow out of your heart, and into the souls of the people around you. Happy Thanksgiving!



The Very Reverend Samuel G. Candler  
Dean of the Cathedral of St. Philip