

## Bishop's Message for October 2009

Listening to a call-in talk radio show at noon today, I heard some significant stories about real people who are fairing not very well in this time of economic downturn: a father of five, a contractor by trade now without work, trying to make a mortgage payment, a car payment, and hold his family together financially; a young social worker, recent university graduate, working in the not-for-profit sector, maintaining a family of four on a salary that qualifies him for public housing; and the couple who opened a home renovation business and can't keep up with the demand. People are experiencing this time of recession in wildly different ways. No doubt you have your own stories to share.

Given that back-drop, I began wondering if anything will change in the manner of our observance of Thanksgiving this year. All things come from God – in scarcity and want, in plenty and abundance – all things come from God. Perhaps our eyes are more open to perceive God's grace and blessing when we're feeling the pinch. If happiness is any indication of one's ability to give thanks, some of the happiest people on the planet have a mere fraction of money and material to deal with than you and me. In any case, as people of faith we do well to remember what Luther taught us in the Catechism: "God daily and abundantly provides...all the necessities and nourishment for this body and life... And all this is done out of pure, fatherly, and divine goodness and mercy without any merit or worthiness of mine at all! For all of this I owe it to God to thank and praise, serve and obey him. This is most certainly true." May you find in your life ample reasons to give thanks with a grateful heart!

+Ronald B. Mayan, Bishop  
Synod of Alberta and the Territories