

the love and care they would give if they had been its natural parents. Adoption is an alternative that provides family life for children who cannot live with their biological parents, and it is especially fitting that at Thanksgiving time we emphasize the importance of family life through the observance of National Adoption Week.

This week provides an opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to give every child waiting to be adopted the chance to become part of a family. During this holiday season, let us work to encourage community acceptance and support for adoption, and take time to recognize the efforts of adoptive parent groups, companies, organizations, and agencies that assure adoptive placements for waiting children. We also pay tribute to those magnanimous people who have opened their homes and hearts to children, forming the bonds of love that we call the family.

The Congress, by Senate Joint Resolution 51, has designated the week of November 24 through November 30, 1985, as "National Adoption Week" and authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of this week.

Ante, p. 812.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim the week of November 24 through November 30, 1985, as National Adoption Week, and I call on all Americans and governmental and private agencies to observe the week with appropriate activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this fifteenth day of November, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-five, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and tenth.

RONALD REAGAN

Proclamation 5412 of November 15, 1985

Thanksgiving Day, 1985

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Although the time and date of the first American thanksgiving observance may be uncertain, there is no question but that this treasured custom derives from our Judeo-Christian heritage. "Unto Thee, O God, do we give thanks," the Psalmist sang, praising God not only for the "wondrous works" of His creation, but for loving guidance and deliverance from dangers.

A band of settlers arriving in Maine in 1607 held a service of thanks for their safe journey, and twelve years later settlers in Virginia set aside a day of thanksgiving for their survival. In 1621 Governor William Bradford created the most famous of all such observances at Plymouth Colony when a bounteous harvest prompted him to proclaim a special day "to render thanksgiving to the Almighty God for all His blessings." The Spaniards in California and the Dutch in New Amsterdam also held services to give public thanks to God.

In 1777, during our War of Independence, the Continental Congress set aside a day for thanksgiving and praise for our victory at the battle of Saratoga. It was the first time all the colonies took part in such an event on the same day. The following year, upon news that France was coming to our

aid, George Washington at Valley Forge prescribed a special day of thanksgiving. Later, as our first President, he responded to a Congressional petition by declaring Thursday, November 26, 1789, the first Thanksgiving Day of the United States of America.

Although there were many state and national thanksgiving days proclaimed in the ensuing years, it was the tireless crusade of one woman, Sarah Josepha Hale, that finally led to the establishment of this beautiful feast as an annual nationwide observance. Her editorials so touched the heart of Abraham Lincoln that in 1863—even in the midst of the Civil War—he enjoined his countrymen to be mindful of their many blessings, cautioning them not to forget “the source from which they come,” that they are “the gracious gifts of the Most High God. . . . Who ought to be thanked “with one heart and one voice by the whole American People.”

It is in that spirit that I now invite all Americans to take part again in this beautiful tradition with its roots deep in our history and deeper still in our hearts. We manifest our gratitude to God for the many blessings he has showered upon our land and upon its people.

In this season of Thanksgiving we are grateful for our abundant harvests and the productivity of our industries; for the discoveries of our laboratories; for the researches of our scientists and scholars; for the achievements of our artists, musicians, writers, clergy, teachers, physicians, businessmen, engineers, public servants, farmers, mechanics, artisans, and workers of every sort whose honest toil of mind and body in a free land rewards them and their families and enriches our entire Nation.

Let us thank God for our families, friends, and neighbors, and for the joy of this very festival we celebrate in His name. Let every house of worship in the land and every home and every heart be filled with the spirit of gratitude and praise and love on this Thanksgiving Day.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, in the spirit and tradition of the Pilgrims, the Continental Congress, and past Presidents, do hereby proclaim Thursday, November 28, 1985, as a day of national Thanksgiving. I call upon every citizen of this great Nation to gather together in homes and places of worship and offer prayers of praise and gratitude for the many blessings Almighty God has bestowed upon our beloved country.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this fifteenth day of November, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-five, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and tenth.

RONALD REAGAN

Proclamation 5413 of November 23, 1985

National Day of Fasting To Raise Funds To Combat Hunger, 1985

*By the President of the United States of America
A Proclamation*

At this time of national Thanksgiving, when we thank God for our many blessings, we are especially mindful of those in distress. And we thank God for inviting us to respond with open hearts to the cry of the afflicted and