How Many Thanksgiving Days?

No specific date was ever recorded for the first Thanksgiving, but the year of the fall feast is known to be 1621, most likely somewhere between September and November. About 90 Wampanoag Indians joined the Pilgrims to celebrate and give thanks for their bounty. In Edward Winslow's account of the three-day celebration, he wrote the following:

> *And although it be not always so plentiful, as it was at this time with us, yet by the goodness of God, we are so far from want, that we often wish you partakers of our plenty."*

Winslow and William Bradford both recorded that fowl and deer were on the menu, but made no specific mention of turkey, although in other writings they referred to the abundance of wild turkey.

The Continental Congress of 1777 declared the first National Day of Thanksgiving as December 18th. In 1779, George Washington made a declaration of Thanksgiving on the last Thursday of November, although it was mere a declaration and not an actual national holiday. In 1846, Sarah Josepha Hale, a magazine publisher, began writing US presidents asking them to declare Thanksgiving as a national holiday. Presidents Taylor, Fillmore, Pierce and Buchanan ignore her requests. Abraham Lincoln was the only one to actually listen to her petitions and in 1863 supported legislation which finally created the Thanksgiving as a national holiday.

So… since 1621, there have been 403 years of thanksgiving. If we start from 1777, we count 247 years. If we go the "official" route, we have had 161 nationally recognized Thanksgiving Days, counting this Thursday. Amen!

But let's go one step further. God tells us through Paul's pen, *"In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christi Jesus concerning you,"* (1 Thessalonians 5:18, KJV). Logic demands the recognition that "*everything*" must include *every day.* That changes the math! Even if we take the "official" date of 1863, Americans have had 58,765 days to give thanks unto God for all His blessings which are profound and plentiful.

No wonder Paul wrote that we should be, "Giving thanks ***always*** and for ***everything*** to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. I consider Thanksgiving to be the most biblical of all national holidays on the US calendar. But let's rejoice today and this Thursday for the 58,765th day of thanksgiving!

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