**A Thanksgiving prayer**

By [Fran Caffey Sandin](http://paper.i21st.cn/story/114728.html#searchaid)

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“God, give us thankful hearts for these and for all our many blessings.” That was the prayer (祈祷) my father, an East Texas farmer, said over every meal.  
  
Pa passed away long ago, but I try to follow his example every day. The year we spent Thanksgiving at our cabin on Lake Tawakoni was such a time.  
  
On that crisp fall day many trees stood naked, with brightly-colored leaves in piles around their trunks. A log (木头) crackled (噼啪作响) in the fireplace and the smell of hot spiced (加了香料的) cider (苹果酒) filled the air. It promised to be a perfect day.  
  
I opened the oven, put in our huge turkey and tried to turn on the old lake house oven. It took just a few minutes for me to realize that the heating had failed.  
  
I only had a few hours before family members and special friends were going to arrive with side dishes, so I called my neighbor Lois and explained my problem.  
  
Lois just laughed and said: “Honey, you bring that turkey to my house. We’ll have it cooking in no time.”  
  
With a sigh of relief, I put the roasting pan (平底锅) into the car and drove across the road. Lois babysat the big bird while I returned to the lake house and prepared a festive (充满节日气氛的) table. While the turkey cooked to perfection in her oven, I gave special thanks for kind neighbors.  
  
Our family arrived. We paused before our meal, stood in a circle and prayed. Some people mentioned things for which they were particularly thankful and others stood in respectful silence. The tissue (面巾纸) box made its way around the circle as some of us began to cry – a sign of joy rather than sorrow.  
  
When the last of the food was swept off the table, I took a deep breath. A Thanksgiving prayer is easy for me when things are going well, but sometimes it takes extra courage to give thanks when I am sad or when something unforeseen disrupts my plans - even a broken oven.   
  
However, then I stopped to reflect upon Pa and the many times I heard him say, “God, give us thankful hearts for these and for all our many blessings.” I want that to be my prayer, too.