

Hello Eastern Star Sisters and Brothers,

Oh my goodness, how we miss getting to be together! Thanksgiving has always been one of my favorite holidays because our family all came together to share time together and to give thanks together. This year will be a much smaller gathering – but we can still be thankful for the blessings that have enriched our lives.

One day last week I stood in line for about an hour to get into the store to buy groceries. Every person in line was being thoughtful of the others in line and maintained the appropriate physical distance. It was a glorious November afternoon with unseasonably warm weather – and just a slight breeze rather than one of those infamous New Mexico winds. I did not hear a single person complain about the wait. Even though we were standing several feet apart, of course some conversations were started. Many, like me were getting items for Thanksgiving dinner because we did not want to wait until this week when items might not be available. Several, like me, made the comment that their dinner was going to be much smaller than in years past. Folks were being very patient, but as time wore on, we got to the point where we were practically cheering for those who were leaving the store because it meant we were just a little closer to getting inside the door. Once I got into the store, I became a part of the grocery store dance. You know the one where we all look for the footprints and arrows on the floor to tell us which way we should be going. Arthur Murray would have been proud of most of us. There were some who seemed unable to “feel the beat” and were going the wrong way like a salmon heading purposefully upstream. I was pleased to find every item I needed except for fresh thyme. Not a crisis, I’ll make do with ground thyme. But I could not remember if I had any at home so purchased the only size available from the store’s spice selection which should last me well into the next decade. One thing about limited capacity – there was absolutely no line at the checkout stand!



I share this story because the day in itself was a blessing. I was able to make my list and know that I could get my groceries. I did not have to worry that there would not be food on the table. I came home to a warm, cozy house and did not have to worry if I will be able to make the house payment. I am saddened so deeply by the stories I have seen on the news about folks who have lost so much because of this pandemic, the pictures of long lines where people are waiting to get food so they can feed their family. Who could have believed this could have gone on for so long?! So, when Thanksgiving dinner is ready and my much smaller family sits down to share this meal, I will give thanks that we are safe and together. Perhaps when this pandemic is all over, every single person will remember what a blessing it is just to be together. And maybe, just maybe, we will care for each other just a little better.

I look forward to the time we can all be together again. (and if you need to borrow any ground thyme, I have plenty)

Shirley Crawford
Grand Chaplain