



On the beat by Fe Koons

On December 26, 1941, President Roosevelt signed the bill making the date of Thanksgiving a national holiday and fixed the day as the fourth Thursday of November. The Pilgrims who were dissenters from England were in Plymouth. They had a bountiful harvest. They ate with King Massasoit of the Wampanoag Native American who had taught them how to plant corn and other crops. There were 50 Pilgrims and 90 Native Americans.

On Thanksgiving

Traditionally, Thanksgiving is the time when families bond together. Nowadays, it means the beginning of the holidays when shopping spree gets crazy. It is also the time when the homeless are fed. Oftentimes the impoverished are remembered only on Thanksgiving.

It is probably the beginning of the conquest of the Native Americans who welcome those who escaped from the tyranny of England.

In these times of war and racism, Thanksgiving should be a reminder of the blessings that we have. Like the Native Americans, we should welcome those who flee from warring countries and seek asylum in the United States. After all, America is home to those who dream of a better life.

This message was emphasized by the poet Emma Lazarus in her sonnet "The New Colossus" in 1883.

Its lines were inscribed on a bronze plaque in the pedestal of the Statue of Liberty --- "Give me your tired, your poor, Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, The wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me; I lift my lamp beside the golden door!" Lazarus was involved in the anti-Semitic movement and advocated on behalf of the poor Jewish refugees from Russia.

In reality, the Pilgrims were refugees from England who sought sanctuary in this nation. The native Americans embraced them as new settlers. Today, we need to extend our hands to those who seek shelter in the United States. This is the true meaning of Thanksgiving --- not shopping, but rather cuddling those in need of help.

After all, we are one family in this global humanity.

