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Abundance Holiday Season Theme

OF all our holidays, none is more meaningful in the realm of material blessings than the Thanksgiving season. It is dedicated to recognition of the abundance we enjoy.

From a spiritual viewpoint, our period of Thanksgiving presupposes belief in God as Creator of the universe. Without such faith, to whom would we offer our thanks?

Sharing of food with families and neighbors was a feature of the first American Thanksgiving. Such sharing and fellowship have been implicit in traditional observances since.

Plentiful supplies of food make possible our high standard of living. Ability of one family to produce food for itself and more than 50 others releases most of us to engage in pursuits not directly involving production of food, such as cultural, educational, manufacturing and recreational activities.

That our nation has been blessed in this respect is evident beyond argument, even though consumers sometimes may feel food costs too

much. How much would we be willing to pay for food if the supermarket shelves were empty?

Agriculture is the only industry that our society must have to survive. It really is our only essential business.

For decades, civic organizations have tried to make our urban-rural relationship better understood and more appreciated by sponsoring annual farm-city weeks. This year, the period designated is Nov. 18-24.

In their spending, people often include items on their food bills that are not food. Young farmers in DeKalb County, Ill., made this point dramatically not long ago.

They stationed themselves at supermarket checkout lanes, offering to pay for food purchases of shoppers. Reporters were there to record reactions. Shoppers were skeptical about getting something for nothing, but most agreed to try it.

The deal was that the young farmers would pay full prices for food

purchases in the carts, such as meats, vegetables and fruits. They would pay half price for snacks, such as potato chips. Shoppers would pay for everything else, including tissues, utensils, drugs and cosmetics.

Newsman covering the demonstration reported shopper non-food purchases ranged from a low of 20 per cent to a high of 60 per cent of what was in the grocery carts.

This shows that people may not be spending as much money on foods as many had presumed. It also shows that we have an abundance of good things of life in addition to food.

Moreover, we have the money needed to pay for these things, because we are well paid for our individual contributions to society, to the economy, and to our country's productivity.

For all of these blessings and the freedom to enjoy them, let us pause to give thanks to God!