**George Washington’s 1st Presidential Proclamation**

The 1st Presidential Proclamation was signed by our nation’s 1st President on October 3, 1789.

Even before being sworn in as America’s 1st Chief Executive in April of 1789, George Washington had been well aware that much of the responsibility for the future of the young nation, this great and unique experiment in liberty, rested on his shoulders. He would be leading the new republic through uncharted territory.

Washington’s faith; his reliance on God, to Whom he had referred at one point in his Inaugural Speech as “the Great Author of every public and private good”; and his confidence in the power of prayer, had been sources of strength throughout his life. Thus, the President was understandably in favor of the resolution that Congress had passed in the autumn of 1789, requesting him to declare a thanksgiving observance in recognition of the creation of the new U.S. Constitution. Washington responded by issuing a proclamation calling for a National Day of Thanksgiving and Prayer. This 1st Presidential Proclamation stated:

*WHEREAS, It is the duty of all nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey His will, to be grateful for His benefits, and humbly implore His protection and favor;*

*WHEREAS, Both the houses of Congress have…requested me “to recommend to the people of the United States a day of public thanksgiving and prayer, to be observed by acknowledging with grateful hearts the many and signal favors of Almighty God, especially by affording them an opportunity peaceably to establish a form of government for their safety and happiness:”*

*Now, therefore, I do recommend and assign Thursday, the 26th day of November next, to be devoted by the people of these States to the service of that great and glorious Being who is the beneficent author of all the good that was, that is, or that will be; that we may then all unite in rendering unto Him our sincere and humble thanks for His kind care and protection of the people of this country previous to their becoming a nation; for the…favorable interpositions of His providence in the course and conclusion of the late war;…for the peaceable and rational manner in which we have been able to establish constitutions of government for our safety and happiness, and particularly the national one now lately instituted for the civil and religious liberty with which we are blessed, and…for all the great and various favors which He has been pleased to confer upon us.*

*And also that we may then unite in most humbly offering our prayers and supplications to the great Lord and Ruler of Nations and beseech Him to…render our National Government a blessing to all the people by constantly being a Government of wise, just and constitutional laws,…faithfully executed and obeyed;…to promote the knowledge and practice of true religion and virtue, and…to grant unto all mankind such a degree of temporal prosperity as He alone knows to be best.*

May our nation and its leaders follow George Washington’s example and remember to humbly acknowledge the true Source of the many blessings this country has enjoyed since its beginnings.

Priscilla Poese, *AzFRW Americanism*