



# Remembering the Blessings

## *The President's 2008 Thanksgiving Message*

**A**s we approach another wonderful Thanksgiving Day, let us remember to be grateful for what our Creator has given us, and that the Holy People bestow their blessings upon us each day as individuals, as families, and as a great Nation.

Although there are many things to be thankful for daily, we often tend to forget that every day is Mother's Day. Every day is Father's Day. Every day is Grandparents' Day. And every day is Children's Day. So a day is set aside to remember and give thanks for all our blessings, and that is as it should be.

As President of the Great Navajo Nation, I have much to be thankful for. Last week, our Nation brought another dream into reality with the opening of the Fire Rock Casino. For its patrons, it is a place to enjoy themselves and relax, and share the thrill of a jackpot with friends and family. For its employees, it's a place to earn a wage to put shoes on little feet, put food on the table, and put gas in the old ride. For me, it's a place that will help put revenues into our Nation's coffers so that we can provide more services to our growing population. On its first day, \$1.2 million went through Fire Rock Casino gaming machines, which bodes well for our future.

I'm also thankful for each and every Navajo Nation employee who toil in service to our people. To work for our Nation means many missed dinners, many lost evenings, a lot of lost time, and a lot of lost sleep. To work for the Navajo Nation means working weekends, missed family gatherings, and skipped school events. But I am grateful to our employees and their families who are willing to make that sacrifice, to put the interests of the Nation and the *Diné* above their own.

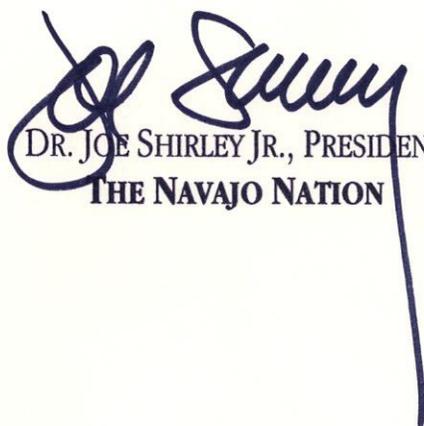
Even on this Thanksgiving Day, many of our police officers will continue to protect us. Doctors, nurses, and technicians in our hospitals will continue to help, heal, and console us. There will be workers in stores, on the road, in offices, and those working to keep our electricity flowing and our communications going.

For us and for them, it is our line of work. That is what we are here to do. We all are in the helping profession. We all have our young ones, our elderly, our students, our land, our government, and our *Diné* to look after. We must continue to ask, "What can we do to help the single mother? What can we do to help the homeless veteran? What can we do to help the grandmother without firewood?"

**W**e have entered into a season of hope and joyful anticipation. We look forward to the inauguration of a new U. S. President, new Senators, new Congressmen and women, new county supervisors, new sheriffs, and many new chapter officials. Many of our people without jobs a year ago now are working. Many of our people who were told they could not repair their homes for 40 years are re-building again in the Bennett Freeze Area. And we are beginning to hear plans to bring our young warriors in Iraq and Afghanistan home for good.

At this time of Thanksgiving, there is no time for remorse despite troubles on life's road. We remember what our grandparents told us, that when we fall down, we should get up, dust ourselves off, and keep going.

Today, as President, my heart is glad and I am very happy for the Navajo People, for the Navajo Nation, and for all of Native America. We have everything in the world to be thankful for. Every day is a Thanksgiving Day. With the gathering of our families, we should celebrate life. We should begin each day with good thoughts as we whisper our words of prayer and sprinkle ground white corn at the thin glow of dawn.



DR. JOE SHIRLEY JR., PRESIDENT  
THE NAVAJO NATION