

My Thanksgiving Story

My husband and I had the privilege to host family and friends from different cultures at our home for Thanksgiving 2022. Our guest list included our children, future daughter-in-law, grandparents, an aunt, and one sister-in-law. But it also included a DTS student from Pakistan, a student from Canada, and a family from Spain. The food was abundant and delicious, but it was the conversation that was rich!

While trying new Thanksgiving foods, our Pakistani friend talked about the traditional foods from home—the warm spices such as cardamom, cinnamon, and turmeric that he adds to his chicken when he cooks. Our Spanish friends brought a traditional dish, Pan de Jamon, that they ate in Spain. The delicious bread roll was stuffed with ham, bacon, green olives, capers and raisins.

We talked about the status of the Christian faith in each of their home countries. In Canada, the traditional values of marriage and the creation of humans as male and female are not only considered suspect but are actively legislated against. David shared his concern for his home country as it is now illegal to share his Christian values on sexuality with someone who has different values. As a boy, he learned the Lord's Prayer in public school. As an adult, he hardly recognizes his country.

My Pakistani friend shared about the Muslims in Pakistan and how best to reach them. He said it is not illegal to be a Christian, but you must be very careful about how you proselytize. My friend has a burden for Pakistan and says the harvest is plentiful, but they need many more theologically trained leaders.

Dani and Carol have a burden for Spain. A country that looks like it should be a Christian nation because of the beautiful cathedrals. Sadly, Spain is now considered an “unreached” country with the Gospel because fewer than 2% of the people are evangelical Christian. They said the Spaniards in general are very suspicious of evangelical Christians and are not easily reached. The often-tragic history of the Catholic church has tainted their view of the Church universal. Carol said it takes a long time of friendship with a Spaniard before she is willing to listen to the Gospel. Churches grow painfully slow, but they are definitely seeing God at work.

I am thankful God gave our family the opportunity to host such a diverse and rich group of friends for our Thanksgiving celebration! They each thanked us profusely for the meal and warm hospitality, but our family were definitely the beneficiaries of God's goodness through their friendship and conversations.