

A Message for the New Year

Dear Friends and Parishioners: As we welcome in this New Year, we have a wonderful opportunity to look forward, rather than behind us, and to commit ourselves to drawing even closer in our relationship with Christ. Our world is still in pain. Our brothers and sisters in Ukraine still suffer oppression in Crimea. Our brothers and sisters in Syria and much of the Middle East wake up to bombing, destruction and death daily. In our own communities we witness homelessness, poverty, domestic violence and much confusion. In the midst of all this darkness there is a light. We proclaimed Christmas Eve "The Light of Christ has come into the world," and "God is with us." This New Year may you seek that light in your own lives. The light of God's love which when we allow it to shine in us, brings to the world hope and peace. There are many this year who will be facing challenges, loss and at times a sense of desperation and hopelessness. It is in times that the light of Christ helps to give us perspective in all our situations. For where Christ is, even in the midst of turmoil, there is peace. We know that we are not alone, and that God is with us at all times to share in our joys and sorrows. Look around and see him in those around you; those who pick up the phone and call to give you encouragement, or to see how you are doing. Those, who take the time to come and visit and share themselves and their time with you. Those, whom we see in our communities reaching out to those in need. This is really the goodness that permeates our world. The light is stronger than the darkness. Love always trumps hate. We are a "new creation in Christ", by virtue of our Baptism we have died with Him that we might rise with Him. As God's children we do not give into despair, we do not allow others negativity to have power over us... we believe that "all things work out for good for those who love God" as Paul tells us in his letter to the Romans.

In this New Year my prayer for you is simple:

Loving God, look upon Your children and in this New Year fill their hearts with Your love, hope and peace. Teach them to stop looking outward to find you, but rather to look inward. As they rediscover You in their hearts, they will see Your face in all. In the midst of the chaos and uncertainty of this world give them peace. For those who are ill and suffering, I pray You be with them, that they may draw their strength from You. For those who sorrow I pray You give them comfort and consolation. For those who are struggling day to day to make ends meet, I pray You give them patience and hope in better days ahead. For those who have lost their faith, I pray they feel Your presence once again and know that You have always been there enveloping them in Your love. And I pray also for myself Lord, an undeserving servant called to serve, that I may be an even greater witness to Your love and mercy in a world where brokenness seems to be everywhere. Thank You, Lord, for the gift of each other. May we draw strength from one another in times of trial. May we learn to love more in times of challenge. May we be quick to forgive and move on when we are betrayed or hurt, and may we always be the mirror that reflects Your light in darkness. Amen.

TO ALL OF YOU MY DEAR FRIENDS... AND BLESSED AND HAPPY NEW YEAR FILLED WITH PROMISE. GOD BLESS!

With my love and prayers; Fr. Anton