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OUR PIUS UPDATE January 12, 2021





New Year's Resolutions can be challenging, frustrating, and sometimes useless! We've all been there. Good intentions, lofty goals, high expectations and then a few weeks in and it's all forgotten. For years now, I've tried to keep it simple. The same with Advent and Lent. If I take on too much it seems all hopes are dashed I've even messed up the "one word" resolution! Recently I rediscovered Pope Francis' List of New Year's Resolutions in my Facebook Memories. The simple list made me smile.

1. *Don't gossip.*
2. *Finish your meals.*
3. *Make time for others.*
4. *Choose the more humble purchase.*
5. *Meet the poor "in the flesh."*
6. *Stop judging others.*
7. *Befriend those who disagree.*
8. *Make commitments, such as marriage.*
9. *Make it a habit to "ask the Lord."*
10. *Be happy.*

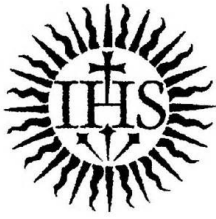
SOURCE: Pam Spano (CatholicMom.com) By [Christoph Wagener](#) - Own work, [CC BY-SA 3.0](#),

LET JUSTICE FLOW: A BLESSING FOR SPEAKING OUT

May we leave the land of silence,
May we bring our truth to voice,
May hope be ours in every step,
May healing flow in every word,
May others stand with us in grace,
May God grant us peace.

SOURCE: Keri Wehlander, Canada

600 Blessings and Prayers From Around the World, compiled by Geoffrey Duncan, Twenty-Third Publications



WE ARE CONFIDENT THAT GOD IS WITH US

The feast of the **Baptism of Jesus** brings us to the end of the Christmas season. So it is good to recall the graces and gifts that have come to each of us (and those whose lives we have touched) since the beginning of Advent. In this Christmas season that has looked so different than years past, how have I welcomed the Lord? In what ways has God stretched and challenged me over these weeks? Where do I find myself now in relationship with myself, with family and friends and co-workers, and especially with God? Which Christmas “gifts” do I particularly treasure this year?

These early days of 2021 don’t offer a roadmap with exact signposts for the year ahead. If we have learned one thing from this past year, it is that we cannot make precise plans. Thus today’s first reading is helpful: *“And this is the boldness we have in him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.”*

What do I ask of the Lord today? Do I have confidence that our God, who has given me so much talent and time and opportunity, will indeed walk with me in holiness and in hope?

SOURCE: *The Jesuit Prayer team*

PRAYER

Lord Jesus,
we have waited for your coming through Advent,
and celebrated your incarnation in this Christmas season.
Help us to incorporate the spiritual practices that we have developed,
and the sense of joy that we have shared,
and live them out each day this year.
May we always remember that you walk with us each day.

Amen.

SOURCE: *The Jesuit Prayer team*

THE OTHER SERINITY PRAYER





HAPPY NEW YEAR OF CARE

SOURCE: Torontostar.com

In December, Cindy Wooden of Catholic News Service asked me: *“What gives you hope for 2021 as it begins? And what do you hope Catholics will do to make 2021 a better year for everyone?”*

Cindy’s excellent questions prompted me to wonder what the traditional ‘Happy New Year’ greeting meant in the good old days ‘BC’ – before COVID-19.

“Here’s wishing you more of the same good things,” I decided it meant, *“along with, if possible, a bit of improvement.”*

But that doesn’t work this time around.

As Pope Francis often repeats, so eloquently, *“Anyone who thinks that the only lesson to be learned [from the annus horribilis 2020 is] the need to improve what we were already doing ... is denying reality” (Fratelli tutti 7).*

Right! So the first step to really meaning *“Happy New Year of 2021”* is to stop fantasizing about the old normal. The vaccine is good and important, but it won’t bring 2019 back. Don’t even think of it!

Instead, we have to wish each other an entirely new, a radically new, new year of 2021, going forward differently and not turning back.

Paraphrasing Pope Francis’s homily on the first day of the new year, 2021 will be a good year only if we start taking care of each other and of our common home. And make no mistake; in this perspective, “each other” doesn’t mean *“our own and forget the rest”*; it means all our brothers and sisters, beginning with the neediest and most vulnerable, as well as future generations too.

That’s my hope and prayer for us as Catholics and as Earth-dwellers: *“Happy New Year of 2021”* means seeing clearly, for the first time, that our only sound hope and our only sustainable happiness will come from caring for each other and our common home. Nothing less, despite the enormous effort and major changes this new way of life will require, will make the new year happy.

This is what I wish for you, and to you I promise the same. *“To all I offer my best wishes that the coming year will enable humanity to advance on the path of fraternity, justice and peace between individuals, communities, peoples and nations.”*[1]

So perhaps you can say with me, “Happy New Year of Care” to everyone we meet!

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[1] Pope Francis, “A Culture of Care as a Path to Peace,” Message for the 54th World day of Peace, 1 January 2021.

Cardinal Michael Czerny S.J. was the Founding Director of AJAN 2002-2010, and is now Under-Secretary, Migrants and Refugees Section, <https://migrants-refugees.va/>

He is a Canadian Jesuit whose family immigrated to Canada when he was a boy.

He was also a Jesuit in training at our own Gonzaga High School when it was a Catholic Jesuit High School.

SOURCE: Cardinal Michael Czerny, SJ January 09, 2021