

Welcome on this first Sunday of the New Year. Some of you have probably been working on your New Year's resolutions. But, this is already the third day of the New Year. Some of you have probably already given up on your New Year's resolutions.

One poor soul I know got down on his knees on New Year's Eve and prayed about his resolutions. He offered this earnest prayer: "Lord, in 2016, my prayer for the New Year is a fat bank account and a thin body. Please don't mix these up like you did last year!"

A New Year's resolution, it has been said, is something that goes in one year and out the other.

The beginning of this New Year reminds me that I am aging—and doing it rather well, if I do say so myself! But as I age, I realize that:

- 1) I talk to myself for a very good reason. Sometimes I need expert advice;
- 2) I admit that sometimes I do roll my eyes out loud;
- 3) I don't really need anger management. I just need people to stop ticking me off;
- 4) My people skills are pretty good. It's my tolerance of idiots that needs work;
- 5) The biggest lie I tell myself is "I don't need to write that down, I'll remember it";
- 6) When I was a child I thought a nap was a punishment. Now, it's the best part of my day;
- 7) If God wanted me to touch my toes, he would've put them on my knees;
- 8) When young people text me "plz" which is shorter than please, I text back "no" which is shorter than "yes";
- 9) Back when I was young, I occasionally had to go to the doctor or the dentist. Now, I have to see a urologist, a podiatrist; a retinologist; a cardiologist, all of whom are driving me to need a psychiatrist;
- 10) Finally, at my age, "getting lucky" means walking into a room and remembering what I came for.

Which, believe it or not, leads us to reflect on the question of the day, "Why are you here"?

My guess is that you have come here today genuinely seeking God. Perhaps you realize how fragile life is; how fragile you are. Maybe the dangers that seem to be stalking the world frighten you, and you need comfort and courage. Or are you possibly just seeking a kind of oasis in the deserted busyness of your life. Why are you here?

**It is the question that the murderous Herod asked of the Magi, the Wise Men, the Kings that came from the East. And what was East of Jerusalem—Persia, present day Iran; Babylon, present day Iraq; Arabia; present day Saudi Arabia. These forbears of the Iranians, Iraqis, and Saudis, presently mortal enemies of each other and Israel, had banded together seeking “the newborn King of the Jews...to do him homage.” And Matthew tells us, “And behold, the star that they had seen at its rising preceded them, until it came and stopped over the place where the child was. They were overjoyed at seeing the star, and on entering the house they saw the child with Mary his mother. They prostrated themselves and did him homage. Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.”**

**My dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,**

**It seems to me that it is possible that there were as many differences among the Magi of old, as there are among their progeny of today, yet they were drawn together by the light of Christ and left everything behind to find Him, and then, in homage to Him, gave everything they had.**

**Is it too much to hope that in this New Year of 2016, we, all of us, throughout the world, might follow their example—be drawn together following the light of Christ, leave our differences behind us, seek him before all else, and then give him all that we are; all that we have; all that we hope to be; in doing homage to him?**

**You see, I believe that God knows every single person in the world by name. He knows every Israeli and Palestinian by name. He knows every child in Zambia and America by name. He knows every Saudi and every Iranian by name. He even knows the people of Isis by name. He knows all of us by name. The more you know about any subject, the less you think in general terms and the more you think in individual terms.**

**God knows everything about every one of us. He is the source of all knowledge and truth. He does not see us as just a faceless sea of humanity. He sees us and loves us as individuals. We, all of us, are loved by God, because we, all of us, are his children.**

**On Christmas Eve, we heard a beautiful rendition of Darius Rucker’s, *WHAT DOES GOD WANT FOR CHRISTMAS*. I believe what God wants for us and from us for the New Year is that we do as the Magi did—allow ourselves to be drawn together by the light of Christ, leaving our differences behind us, and seek Him before all else, and, as they did, give all that we are, all that we have, and all that we hope to be, in doing homage to Him, the New Born King.**

**I hope that is why you are here. And my prayer is that you too will be filled with joy every time you enter here and see Jesus in this the home of His Mother, Our Lady of Consolation.**