

Fr. Martin's Reflection – December 31, 2023

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Happy New Year! I hope you and your family had a wonderful Christmas. I hope there were opportunities to make happy memories. Memories that will brighten your life in the low times of life. Apart from relying on happy memories to sustain us during our low points in life, it is also important to prepare ourselves for those times. After the high of Christmas, January can be a very challenging month for people, especially for those who live alone or those who were bereaved in recent times. It can also be a challenge for families whose children live away from home but who were home for Christmas. Let us be conscious of each other and let's allow the Christmas spirit to continue through January. Let us show kindness, let us be thoughtful and let us smile at each other. It is amazing how a smile can warm one's heart and help us feel alive and loved.

I would also like to recommend some New Year resolutions:

1. Make time for yourself. Steal 15 minutes for you and God. The Chapel of Saints at St. Mary, Bordentown is open every day from 6:30am – 7:30pm, with Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament on Wednesday from 1:00pm – 7:00pm.
2. Read wholesome material. A good book about a Saint, something that makes you feel good, something that is uplifting.
3. Make a date, not a suggestion, to meet a friend on a regular basis.
4. If you are married or in a long-term relationship – have a regular date night.
5. Have a dinner night – invite someone new.
6. Most important of all, tell yourself every day: JESUS LOVES ME

With how the dates fell I didn't get the chance to say my usual "Thank You's." I would like to say a big Thank You to all the hard-working staff of Mary, Mother of the Church Parish, Cathy, Patricia, Sean, Carol, Roy, Patty, and Margaret. Without your dedication and commitment, the parish simply could not function. Alfonso, and all involved in the music ministry, you add beauty to all our liturgies and seasons. The Christmas Carol service was simply magnificent! Roseann, Mary, and Helvy, the team of sacristans, servers at the altar, and flower arrangers, thank you for all you do in making our liturgies run so smoothly and for making our places of worship so beautiful. To all our volunteers—Ushers, Eucharist Ministers, Lectors, all involved in our Religious Education Program, and to all of you who support the parish, thank you!

Fr. Anson, Fr. Steve, Deacon Gary, Deacon Tom, and Deacon Larry, as a parish we are all so grateful for your spiritual care and commitment, and on a personal note, thank you for all the support and help you give to me, it is much appreciated. May God bless you in His ministry and may you, and your family be blessed with good health and happiness throughout 2024.

O Lord, as the years change, may we find rest in your eternal changelessness. Help us to meet this new year bravely, in the faith that, while life changes all around us, you are always the same, guiding us with your wisdom and protecting us with your love, through our Savior Jesus Christ.
(William Temple)

Fr. Martin