

Traditionally on New Year's Day, we look to the future and make resolutions. The Omni and the "Y" are counting on you do to so. Somewhat cynically last year I resolved in 2011 not to eat any calf's liver or sweetbread. And I am proud to say that I kept my resolution. Now far be it from me to discourage anyone from making their New Year's resolutions but from personal experience I have found that New Year's resolutions are often not very effective, especially, the ones that are self-improving and even self-serving. For most of us, they simply do not last very long.

So, if you're looking for a resolution that is really worth keeping this New Year, let me make it simple for you. Resolve to really get connect to God this year. Resolve to pray, every day – and not just to ask God for a favor. Resolve to make your life a conversation with God. Resolve to listen to what He has to say to you. Resolve be reconciled to Him. Resolve to go to confession. Resolve to receive the Eucharist as often as possible. In short, resolve to grow in grace.

Instead of the diet to end all diets, instead of getting rid of all the clutter, simply begin each new day of this year with the resolve to make holiness in your life your first goal. Make this New Year happy by living in the holiness of God as Mary did.

As a Catholic people Christmas is not just one day but a two week liturgical Season and we move deeper into our Christmas celebration by honoring the woman who gave birth to our Savior, Mary, the Mother of God. We call her the Mother of God because she gave birth to a son who was fully human and fully divine. We begin a New Year focused on this woman who was the first disciple. Mary should be for every Catholic a model of faith. When Mary learned that she was to be the Mother of Jesus, she had no idea what the future would bring. When shepherds came glorifying her baby as the Messiah, she quietly reflected upon their message in her heart and resolved

to trust God. There was so much about the future that she didn't understand. But Mary's faithfulness was grounded in simple and absolute trust in God.

And hopefully, we can live life in such a way that the same will be true of our own faith journeys. Faith isn't supposed to be based on knowledge of the future or on what we hope the future will bring us. None of us knows what tomorrow holds and it's a terrible mistake to base our faith on what happens to us. Life for everyone consists in a mysterious mixture of good and evil. Bad things eventually happen to the best of us. We don't have faith in something that will or won't happen. We have faith in Someone who will be with us no matter what happens or doesn't happen.

Our faith is in Emmanuel, a God who is with us, a God who will be with us through whatever events come, the good, the bad and the ugly, the unfair, the unjust and the unimaginable. We're called to be faithful to the One who is ever faithful to us. And that's one thing that Mary was – faithful to God, even when the future was unknown and the present didn't make sense. In 2012 there will be both joy and sadness for all of us. But if we have the faith of the Blessed Mother, if we can put our trust not in the events of our life but in the presence of God then this will be a good year, no matter what takes place.

So, I wish you and your loved ones a blessed New Year, one filled with a deep faith and much grace. If we resolve to grow in holiness this year by keeping our focus on God throughout 2012, then most assuredly no matter what this New Year brings, it will be a Blessed Year. And so with Moses and Aaron I pray, the Lord bless you and keep you! The Lord let his face shine upon you, and be gracious to you! The Lord look upon you kindly and give you peace! Amen! Amen!