

December 29, 2019

Dear Parishioners,

May God bless you all throughout the New Year 2020!

As your pastor, I am addressing this last message of the year 2019 to all of you parishioners at Our Lady of Help of Christians but also to your entire families and friends.

We have just entered the Christmas Season with a great sense of Hope, Peace, Joy and Love! Christmas Eve and Christmas Day have just passed but the beautiful Masses, songs and prayers of Christmas continue to resonate in our hearts.

The Christmas Season ending on the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord (January 12, 2020), includes a series of great celebrations: The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph (this Sunday); The Solemnity of Mary, Holy Mother of God (Wednesday January 1st, 2020); and The Epiphany of the Lord (Sunday January 5, 2020).

The beautiful statue of the Holy Family and the unique painting of Our Lady Help of Christians that adorn our Sanctuary are a constant reminder of the Love that both Mary and Joseph have for each of us. Mary and Joseph are always present to inspire our own family journey on earth. They also help keep our parish united as a prayerful and joyful family of families.

As we look forward to the New Year 2020, we all have much to be grateful to God. Everything we have belongs to God. Because we know that with God everything is possible, there is no limit to what we can hope for. God keeps inviting us to encounter Him in every moment of our lives.

We can anticipate with much excitement the first visit of our new Archbishop Wilton Gregory on our Parish Feast Day: Crowning of Mary and 11:30 am Mass on Sunday May 24, 2020. This is going to be the summit of our celebrating our 40th anniversary and you are all invited to come. We cannot forget that our parish is making its Big 40 on September 15, 2020. To prepare for this summit, we have already held many special activities, and more are coming. However, our Parish Feast Day is our most important annual parish event as on that day we together seek privileged protection from our Patroness Saint, the greatest Saint of all Saints: Our Lady!

God has a wonderful plan for each one of us in 2020! God loves each of us so much that He will never abandon us. We can trust in His Providence all the days of our lives. Like a child, we can surrender to Him. As our Father in heaven, our Abba or Daddy, He will do everything for us. Everything that happens in our lives, whether good or bad, will always lead to something good when we love God (Romans 8:28). God is Love. God has created each of us so as we can love and be loved.

You may have already thought about your personal plans for 2020. You may have already chosen a series of New Year 2020 Resolutions. I suggest that you consider adding one new resolution, a daily short prayer: "Heavenly Father, help me to go out of my comfort zone today and stretch me gently in the right path so that I can do Your will and not my own will. Heavenly Father, help me to hear your whispers in my heart and obey your commands. Heavenly Father, help me to love you and my neighbor. Help me to surrender to you totally!"

I am grateful to God for the blessings He provides me through each one of you! I have written a long wish list for 2020. But how do I know that those wishes are in line with God's Plan for me? I will keep praying with all of you that God can give me the courage, strength and grace to surrender to him totally: do His will and not mine!

May Almighty Father keep blessing each of you throughout the New Year 2020! May the Holy Spirit keep guiding your paths! May you find Jesus' Love every single day! May Mary, Help of Christians, protect you!

One in Christ,
Fr. Alain

