



ST. ANDREW THE APOSTLE

THE NEW YEAR 2021: MORE “CURSE” OR MORE BLESSINGS?

Dear St. Andrew,

As we came closer to ushering in this new year, the tempo of our excitement and expectations accelerated in equal measure. This is because, no doubt, this past year has been horrible, complete with the devastations visited upon us by the coronavirus leading to thousands of deaths, loss of jobs, economic downturn, serious mental health issues etc. Then we had a chaotic election, disruption, of our spiritual and social lives, and the McCarrick saga in our Church. It seemed the “curse” would never end and so we eagerly looked forward to 2021 with greater anticipation to get out of this mess into better days.

However, eight days into this new year, has this curse really ended? It seems not! It seems what ended are months, weeks, and days that made up the year that was 2020. We entered into this new year still with the pandemic situation not getting better. On the contrary, there is an increasing surge with our State of Arizona ranking among the worse hit in the whole world right now. Despite the good news of the vaccines, many are still yet to receive it. As a result, there is a growing fear that we might enter into another spate of lockdown or even have our churches closed. As if this is not bad enough, two days ago, our country witnessed a very disturbing scenario of violence in our Capital Washington DC., during the Congress session. The future of our politics and democracy as a result seems to draw a negative global scrutiny from a world that up to now looks up to us for example and inspiration.

At a personal level, the year also began for me with a realization that I could have been possibly exposed to the virus. Even though I do not have serious symptoms to worry about, out of an abundance of caution and concern for the safety of everyone, I immediately decided to quarantine in our rectory. Since then, I have not been able to enjoy the physical company of my brothers all this time and it is not funny! I miss my brother priests and they miss me, even though we live under the same roof! Those of you who have gone through this scenario will understand what I’m taking about. Unfortunately, I will continue to self-isolate a little longer until I get my test result since I believe in the maxim: “Better cautious than sorry!”

Despite all these however, there continues to be greater hope and blessings still evident in this year we have just begun. The reality is that we are not worse off because it could be worse! The reason for this is because we have one constant and powerful support that has always been available to us even through the darkest moments of this past year, our Faith, our God!

From the desk of our Pastor
Fr. Robert S. Aliunzi, AJ



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This same God continues to allow this situation in order to remind us that “The earth is the LORD’s, and everything in it. The world and all its people belong to him” (Ps. 24:1). Therefore, He is bigger and stronger and greater than all these problems. We have to repent of our shortcomings, put our acts together and return to Him in faith. Let our God be God especially during this year!

Let us, as we begin the year, not be comfortable with attending virtual Masses especially when we can attend in person and be a part of our community. The overall low attendance of our Christmas Masses tends to suggest that many of us are either now comfortable to attend Masses virtually as a new normal or some have even abandoned doing so altogether. My appeal to you, once again, is to let God be God and come back to Him and He will protect you and your families from all these calamities. Let us continue to pray at our homes more than ever before.

In addition to all these however, let us continue to observe our recommended safety measures that have seen us assemble and worship safely so far. Please, wear your masks at all those prescribed times, keep social distance, sanitize and wash your hands frequently. And, finally, I urge you to resume coming in person as our seating capacity has remained below our capacity.

God bless and keep you all safe and healthy and Happy New Year.