

# A View from the Pew

by Deacon Greg Kandra

## Resolutions

*NOTE: Several people asked for a copy of the homily I delivered on January 1, so here it is—slightly edited for space. Happy New Year!*

Google Surveys asked 1,000 people what their resolutions were for 2019—and, believe it or not, they are virtually the same as the ones for 2018:

- 1) Exercise and lose weight.
- 2) Save money.
- 3) Travel.

For all our missteps and mistakes, we are creatures who never give up. Despite the evidence on the scale and in our bank accounts, we believe that nothing is impossible.

So, it seems fitting that the Church, in her wisdom, has dedicated January 1 to the woman who herself knew only too well that “nothing is impossible with God.”

This day, we honor Mary, the Mother of God, the mother of all possibility, the mother of our salvation, the mother of all hope.

Like the first day of a new year or the start of a new calendar, she is pure and unblemished. I have a blotter calendar on my desk at work. January and every month after is beautiful. No coffee stains or bagel crumbs or grape jelly dribbles or ink blots or doodles on the edges.

Don't we wish our lives in the new year could be the same way?

Every year, we resolve to try and make them so. But maybe we need to find a better way. Maybe we need to try harder to model our lives on the woman we honor this day.

In short, let us resolve to be more like Mary.

First, let us resolve to be open to miracles and to listen to angels. Let's be prepared to expect the unexpected—and to welcome what God brings us as a gift of grace. Let us resolve to live with that grace—as God's servant, as his handmaid, as his instrument. Resolve to serve, and to do it for others with haste, as Mary served her cousin Elizabeth.

Let us resolve to magnify God, so our souls and our lives and everything we are can beautifully and boldly proclaim the greatness of the Lord.

Let us resolve to go where God wants us to go, trusting that he will be with us, no matter how hard the challenge or how arduous the journey, even if it is on the back of a donkey.

May we resolve to welcome the stranger—shepherds from the fields, wise men from the East, or any of those who may be different from us but who may come, nonetheless, with gifts.

In times of anxiety and trial may we, like Mary and Joseph, resolve to still seek Jesus when we fear we have lost him—and trust that God will help us to find him.

Let us resolve to speak on behalf of those who may not have a voice—or who may be too timid to speak for themselves. May God grant us holy courage when we need it. And may we not be afraid to do as Mary did at Cana and turn to Jesus in faith and trust.

May we resolve to be people of prayer and remembrance. Let us resolve to honor sacred silence. May we trust enough to “hold all these things in our heart” and surrender any uncertainty or doubt or anxiety to God.

Let us resolve always to point others to Christ—remembering Mary's last recorded words in scripture, her message to us and to all who believe: “Do whatever he tells you.”

In doing so, may we resolve to follow Jesus at all times, across every valley, and up every hill, even to Calvary.

In times of despair and sorrow, let us resolve to stay with him when others have fled.

May we resolve to honor him when others deny him, to embrace him when others betray him, and to love the Body of Christ even when it is broken, and bleeding, and scarred.

And finally, let us resolve to never forget that nothing is impossible with God.

Happy New Year!

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