

Some Thoughts for January 2024

Marge Loenser

A happy and blessed New Year to all! How did 2023 slip by so quickly? For some reason the words of an old song, sung by the 'Hilltoppers' circa 1954, keep running through my brain: "Time waits for no one, it passes you by; It rolls on forever, like the clouds in the sky. Time waits for no one, it goes endlessly, it flows like a river, going out to the sea...."

January starts us out with the feast of Mary, mother of God. A fitting beginning to this new year. As St. Mother Theresa said, "No Mary--no Jesus." Bless and protect us this new year Holy Mother--keep us under your mantle of love.

On the 7th we have the Epiphany of the Lord. "We three kings of orient are, bearing gifts we travel afar..." How we love the story of the three wise men coming to Bethlehem to honor the new Baby King, bearing gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. God calls all people to Himself. He is not prejudiced. He came to save all mankind. Praise and thank You, Baby Jesus!

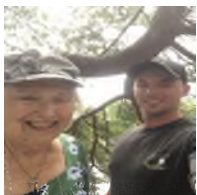
On the 8th, Jesus shows us His complete humility by being baptized by John in the Jordan. John says, "I need to be baptized by You, and do you come to me?" But Jesus answered "Let it be so now for it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness. (Matt 3: 14-15) Jesus, meek and humble of heart, make my heart like unto thine!

We all know the story of the conversion of St. Paul. (celebrated on the 28th) He was knocked to the ground and blinded by the resurrected Jesus. "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" (Acts: 9) Paul being a devout Pharisee, was on his way to Damascus chasing down the followers of Jesus. He thought he was avenging God by eradicating what he believed to be heresy. He was rounding up and sometimes killing these followers of Jesus. After he recovered his sight, he was told the story of Jesus, being the Messiah, and with time and the help of the apostles, he became probably the best evangelist of all time, traveling the ancient world spreading the news of salvation. St. Paul pray for us.

Thank you, Lord for all the saints we celebrate this January. May they intercede for us in our needs.

Let us pray for all who are suffering serious illness and for those of us, like myself and my family, who pray each day for a miracle healing for our loved one who seems beyond medical help. "God grant us the serenity to accept the things we cannot change, the courage to change the things we can, and the wisdom to know the difference." However, we never cease asking God for miracles. I recall Jesus' story about the woman who pestered the judge until he -- worn out by her begging -- agreed to grant her wish. (Luke 18: 1-8) Sweet Jesus, hear our prayers and Jesus help us to accept your Holy Will, whatever the outcome. Amen

Love,
Marge



Marge Loenser is a member of Saint Mark's Church in Sea Girt where she is a Lector and a Eucharistic Minister. She has retired from teaching CCD at Saint Mark's. She has been a member of Catholic Women of Zion for about 30 years and is also a member of Mary Queen of Peace Prayer Community for about the same length of time. She writes for a monthly column for Saint Mark's Church Bulletin.