

Henri Nouwen once reflected upon the New Year:

“We must learn to live each day, each hour, yes, each minute as a new beginning, as a unique opportunity to make everything new. Imagine that we could live each moment as a moment pregnant with new life. Imagine that we could live each day as a day full of promises. Imagine that we could walk through the new year always listening to the voice saying to us: ‘I have a gift for you and can’t wait for you to see it!’”

We just celebrated Christmas. In fact, as you read this I am standing on a frozen lake in northern Wisconsin ice fishing and we are in the midst of the 12 days of Christmas. The celebration of the Incarnation continues! But remember how it all started. God came to a young woman and said “I have a gift for you and can’t wait for you to see it!” Well, maybe not in those exact words, but you get the idea...God comes to us. God comes to us with blessings and with gifts, and through those blessings and gifts, He makes everything new in our lives. And, perhaps most importantly, those gifts and blessings, while they change our lives, are not meant for us to hold on to and to keep for ourselves...they are meant for us to receive, and to offer back to God in sacrifice as we share them with one another.

It may be through the gift of helping at the shelter - that’s a blessing
It may be through the gift of taking care of a neighbor - that’s a blessing
It may be through the gift of a smile during a chance encounter - that’s a blessing
It may be through the gift of a kind or understanding word - that’s a blessing
It may be through the gift of a listening ear or shoulder to lean on - that’s a blessing
It may be through the gift of quiet intercessory prayer - that’s a blessing.

This is the beginning of a New Year. We have no idea what the year holds for us. But just imagine...God has a gift for you and can’t wait for you to see it! And when you do, don’t hesitate to share it around because that’s a blessing and it will make everything new!

Happy New Year,
Fr Eric