

Out With the Old, In With the New

As this new year starts, there are some 'old' things most of us would be glad to leave behind.

The COVID-19 pandemic is chief among them! The worry, the uncertainty, the disruption, the suffering, the death. . .

Pray for all who are suffering, and for those caring for them. Pray for those who struggle to accept the needs of pandemic reality.

Lord, help us hold on to hope and act in ways that encourage hope to grow. One hope is in the vaccines, but there is still a dark tunnel ahead before this virus may not have to be a central factor in our daily lives.

There are also other things that should be left behind including: abusive personal attacks, especially in political discord; the misuse of information; the abandoning of truth; putting personal ambition over anything else.

Forgive us when we follow these destructive paths or enable others to do so.

There are things in our past that, to our shame, have too often defined our society: racism; intolerance; sexism; a sense of superiority and entitlement that has often led to consuming selfishly and misusing others for our own gain.

Help us take time in this new year to honestly look at our past and see the ways in which we have contributed to such wrongs, and seek both forgiveness and the strength to make changes that will end such abuses.

At the same time, the start of a new year is a good time to look back and rediscover the good we can do when we draw on the best that God created in us.

In the past we have seen that when we work together, great things are possible – rebuilding whole communities after disaster strikes; giving rather than taking life; feeding the hungry; healing the sick; housing the homeless; sharing our time; talent; friendship; compassion; and understanding.

Give thanks for those who do not leave these things behind and work to carry them forward into the new year. Help all of us to build on the good gifts that God has given each of us to use for the good of everyone.

There are many things we must not leave in the past or lose sight of: the wisdom the past teaches, the value of honor, respect for others, honesty, integrity, truthfulness, and the understanding that we are all God's children, made in God's image and loved.

Lord, help us to let go of those things that tear down the community you call us to foster and keep all that will build it up. Keep us open to new possibilities that will use your gifts to build on the good foundations where we have them from the past so we can construct a better future for everyone.

This week, do not forget to pray for:

- the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Nigeria & other places in the world where people live with violence.
- Refugees & emigrants



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