

Dear Friends of Unity Acres,

As I write the January newsletter we are still in the midst of Advent and the disciples of John the Baptist are asking John, "What must we do?" John tells the tax collector, the soldier and all to repent, to believe the Good News and to do justice. As we look to a new year in the light of Advent and Christmas we are called to rejoice but to rejoice for the right reason -- Jesus, the eternal Son of God is with us "as is". He is with us in the most broken, the most vulnerable of our brothers and sisters. No wonder John the Baptist said repent, believe and do justice and your hearts will be ready to receive Him. We cannot rejoice without preparing our hearts by ongoing repentance, by daily living by Faith, and consistently doing justice which brings us back to a constant need for repentance.

As we look to a new year we are called to be a rejoicing presence in the midst of a broken world sharing fully (doing justice) in its brokenness with repentant believing hearts.

The Armenian earthquake is very much in the news as I write this newsletter and worldwide human solidarity is at a very high pitch but it will soon fade without sustained repentance and faith and daily doing justice. John the Baptist simply summarized what all the prophets lived and proclaimed. Governments will fall back on their self-serving pursuits and even now are responding and sharing only because it is politically expedient to do so. Let us not put any hope in governments for by their very nature they are self-serving and without faith.

As we look to 1989 perhaps our only resolution should be to rejoice because He is with us sharing it all. We can and should rejoice always only because we believe He is with us and therefore we too will share it all with one another in faith. Yes, rejoicing in the midst of shared tears, tiredness, living with necessities not with luxuries that belong to brothers and sisters, sharing the load with the oppressed, the hurting, the alone in our human family. Yes, we can and should rejoice for Jesus is with us. Even now the victory has been won. Rejoice indeed, always, only if we believe and give it all in union with Him.

I know as I look to a new year I feel so much hypocrisy in my life, a professional user of God's precious gifts -- talk the talk but not walk the walk. That is where all the false rejoicing or the lack of joy comes from. It is not the presence of aloneness, of want, of suffering, of injustice. It is how I deal with these hard realities of our human condition. I can truly rejoice in 1989 if I daily live repentance and, believing Jesus is with us, share it all without any thought of self just as He did and does with us and has won the victory. I am such a user and the joy of Jesus' presence rings shallow because my faith is shallow and I am not with His little ones in simple profound oneness; this is the challenge of 1989 for this wounded shallow believer who begs the presence of the Holy Spirit to strengthen these drooping knees.

O, the need for daily prayer. A meaningful time each day to just be with Him. How precious too the Eucharistic celebration. We can offer our lives to the Father only through Jesus and receiving Jesus each day He sends us to see Him and be with Him in many human disguises.

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We know what it is to try to share without faith. The end result is burnout, anger, reverting back to selfishness, etc. We know too what it is to apparently have faith but not share it all - hipocracy, placing burdens on others backs, judgement of others, etc.

Father, we your children of 1989, thank you for the gift of your Son. Jesus, thank you for your healing presence in our broken lives. Thank you too for your gift of the Holy Spirit to teach and guide us - to comfort and admonish us, your disciples. your followers, this year of 1989.

You are the Salt of the earth, the light of the World;  
a blessed 1989 to everyone.

Father McVey

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PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR FRIENDS IN HOSPITALS AND NURSING HOMES:

WILLIE COOK, HILLCREST NURSING HOME, ELLEN ST., OSWEGO, N.Y., 13126

ARTHUR FRANCE, HARWOOD NURSING HOME, SUNRISE DRIVE, OSWEGO, NY, 13126

JOSEPH GARRETT, MICHAUD NURSING HOME, S. 6TH STREET, FULTON, NY, 13069

WILLIE MOORE, SYRACUSE VETERAN'S HOSPITAL, 800 IRVING AVE., SYR., N.Y.  
13210

ROBERT WEINSTEIN, SYRACUSE VETERAN'S HOSPITAL, 800 IRVING AVE., SYR.,  
NY, 13210