

***Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord  
Most Holy Name of Jesus (Latin Mass)  
January 2, 2022  
Year of Saint Joseph***

*“But while the preaching of the divine Word should never be interrupted in the Church, surely in these, our days, it becomes necessary to labor with more than ordinary zeal and piety to nourish and strengthen the faithful with sound and wholesome doctrine, as with the food of life.”  
(Excerpt From: The Catechism of the Council of Trent)*

As a new year dawns upon our parish family, I again encourage all here to make a “new year’s resolution” concerning their faith life through renewed prayer, study, and reflection. I would also like to continue our tradition of making a parish resolution. This year, our resolution will be two-fold. First, after receiving many comments and questions last year due to our Sunday reflections concerning the Catholic faith, I resolve that beginning this weekend and continuing on the first Sunday of each subsequent month, we will continue to reflect upon some aspect of the Roman Catholic Church. Secondly, to achieve our goal of growth in the spiritual life, we will implore the assistance of Saint Joseph. On the third Sunday of each month, we will reflect upon some aspect of the Catholic Church’s belief concerning Saint Joseph, spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The remaining weekends of each month will focus upon the readings we hear read from the Bible on that particular Sunday. It is my prayer for this new year, that each of us will continue to grow in holiness as we journey together toward our eternal homeland.

As we undertake our task of reflecting upon the Catholic Church, we might be tempted to imagine ourselves a small child staring up at the Empire State building or a climber at the foot of Mount Everest. The Catholic Church is 2,000 years old; therefore how could we ever hope to begin to understand Her. She is the Bride of Christ established by God, Himself, in the person of His Divine Son, Jesus. Allow me to quell any fears before we begin this undertaking. None of us will ever know enough about our Catholic Faith to become a renowned intellectual. Yet, we all have been given the opportunity each day to become a saint. Yes, we have been invited by God to become saints with Him in Heaven. We do this in varied capacities through the way we obey and serve Him here and now. Please, never forget the Catholic Church was instituted by God to provide true and lasting means for His children to become holy until the day He returns in His heavenly glory. Other communities may claim this ability, but only God’s Catholic Church has the guidance of the Holy Spirit to ensure this claim.

Some may think my words too bold due to the times in which we live. We are told that in the “spirit of Ecumenism” coupled with not wishing to offend, we must now profess all religions as paths leading men to holiness and onto a life lived in and with God. This line of thought, if held, can only lead a sincere Catholic into a state of questioning and confusion. Allow me to state this plainly and clearly: all religions are not equal nor do they lead us to God. Only the Catholic Church (Eastern and Western) claims to be founded by God. All other

Christian communities are founded by a man or woman who claimed inspiration from God, separating themselves and their listeners from another older established Christian community. This sure, certain, lasting belief in the preeminence of Catholic Church allocating the graces bestowed upon humanity and desirous of all mankind offering fitting praise to God, led men and women, from the Apostles to our modern-day disciples, to journey from Jerusalem, after Pentecost, to all parts of the globe in search of God's children. And, once found, to bestow upon those children their spiritual birthright - Baptism and incorporation into the family of the Blessed Trinity as adopted sons and daughters. Does this belief, this "Great Commission" still hold true in our time? Yes, most definitively. It must still be true today as it was in the time of the early Catholic Church, the time of Saints Peter and Paul, the great Fathers, and holy martyrs. For if it no longer holds true today, then it was never true to begin with.

Please, never judge the Catholic Church, its beauty and grandeur, its dignity and holiness, its Tradition and Sacred Scripture, all this willed by God, formed by Jesus, and guided by the Holy Spirit, by its leaders. We, the deck hands on this great ship of the Catholic Church, may be tempted to see its leaders as either competent or foolhardy skippers. No, there is only one captain on this boat of the Church and that captain is God. He pilots this boat and He will lead us to a safe harbor provided we do our part (of which I have no doubt, this year we will) working to make sure the great ship of the Catholic Church remains fit and seaworthy.