

Fr. Luan Tran
Weekly Bulletin Notes
2021

January 3, 2021: My Dear Parishioners,

This epitaph was found on the grave of St. Ignatius of Loyala: “Non coarctari maximo, contineri tamen a minimo, divinum est” (“Not to be contained by the greatest, yet willing to be encompassed by the smallest – that is divine”). This is the essence of Christmas! Think about it! God, Whom nothing could contain, has allowed Himself to be encompassed by the smallest! The infinitely great was willing to be encompassed by the infinitely small! Yes, that is the kind of God we Christians worship. He Who is infinitely great has stooped down to our own level. He Who is maximum has allowed Himself to be bound by the minimum! He Who is beyond the greatest thing or idea human beings could ever imagine has deigned to become a little tiny baby! This thought about God has consoled me so much in these COVID times. There were times when I was about to give up on bothering with God, God reminded me of how much He in fact cared about me – me and my petty sins and non-sins, me and my irrelevant worries, me and my trifling concerns! Christmas was a most beautiful reminder of this to all of us, I hope. May we always remember that, regardless how helpless and frustrated we may feel in front of God’s apparent silence, God does indeed pay attention to each one of us. God is so great that nothing, however small, can escape His notice. No prayer of ours ever goes unanswered. No sorrow of ours is ever ignored. And no tear of ours is ever not acknowledged. God knows us better than we know ourselves, and before we even think about asking Him for something, He has already known what He would do to help us! This is how I have been able to continue to pray and to trust in God, even now! As we enter a new year, may we never forget this truth about God! Have a most blessed New Year! God Bless You!

January 10, 2021: My Dear Parishioners,

Please read the following from the Catholic News Agency (CNA): “On the 8th of December, 2020, Pope Francis announced a Year of St. Joseph, in honor of the 150th anniversary of the saint’s proclamation as patron of the Universal Church. Pope Francis said he was establishing the year so that “every member of the faithful, following his example, may strengthen their life of faith daily in the complete fulfillment of God’s will.” In making his declaration, Pope Francis noted that this year marks the 150th anniversary of the saint’s proclamation as patron of the Universal Church by Pope Pius IX on Dec. 8, 1870. Pope Francis said the coronavirus pandemic has heightened his desire to reflect on St. Joseph, as so many people during the pandemic have made hidden sacrifices to protect others, just as St. Joseph quietly protected and cared for Mary and Jesus. “Each of us can discover in Joseph -- the man who goes unnoticed, a daily, discreet and hidden presence -- an intercessor, a support and a guide in times of trouble,” the pope wrote. He also said he wanted to highlight St. Joseph’s role as a father who served his family with

charity and humility, adding, “Our world today needs fathers.” The year begins Dec. 8, 2020, and concludes on Dec. 8, 2021.’

Personally, I have not met any Catholic who does not have a special affection for St. “Joe”! Years ago, he assisted the Vietnamese Catholic community in Portland in their efforts to purchase the Holy Child Academy property on NE Alameda Drive for their spiritual home. It was an amazing success! St. Joseph has accompanied me all my priestly life and protected me from all kinds of dangers – spiritual and physical. He and the Blessed Mother saved our family through some very difficult crises. At our weekday Masses, I and the daily Mass people always remember to pray to St. Joseph for his protection over our school and parish families. So far, through his help, the darn virus has been kept at bay! We could not have survived this far without him!

I will be out for several weeks for knee replacement surgery and recuperation. Please remember this poor priest in your prayer on Tuesday this coming week.

God bless you!