

**January 2, 2022**

Dear Friends,

Well 2021 has finally come to an end. We did manage to make it through another year. We all pretty much thought that the pandemic would wind down last year and we would emerge into normalcy again. Alas, not so. Even as I prepare this to go to press the new Omicron variant of the Covid19 is running rampant here and in a number of places in the world. Initial reports seem to indicate an even more contagious form of the virus but perhaps a less lethal variety. We will see. In the meantime, much of the disagreements are still in the air. Masks. Vaccinations. Booster shots. Herd immunity.

When will it all end? I persist in believing that Our Lord is allowing this pandemic to continue because we have not yet learned the lessons we are supposed to have learned. Not enough of us have turned to the Lord in our need and truly placed ourselves in his hands and asked for his help. We have pretty steadfastly decided that we will manage this on our own “thank-you-very-much.” The Lord wants us to turn to Him and ask his help. Not solve this on our own. But there is more. We do not even grasp anymore that we have put aside his Ten Commandments and replaced them with a moral code of our own making—and much more, to our own liking. If we can get enough people to go along, we can pretty much live any way we would like and that appears to be what many want.

The trouble is, only the true way of life will bring happiness, joy and peace. Substitute ways of life may make us feel content temporarily but if they are not in harmony with the creative and redemptive way of the living God—guess what? They will not bring life, nor satisfaction nor harmonious living. We have not continued to put God first. We have substituted a whole variety of gods to replace him. Political power. Sports. Celebrity. Entertainment. Success. Money. You can name others. You get my drift though. “I am the Lord thy God thou shalt not have strange gods before me.” Choose to put all your trust in false gods? Let them protect you. But, you see, that really doesn’t work. It didn’t work in the time of Moses or King David or when The Babylonians were surrounding Jerusalem or when the Roman Empire ruled most of the known world.

There is one God. The Father and Creator of all. He has created and his creation has a design that cannot be contradicted without doing fundamental damage to life on earth. Even if many think otherwise. This pandemic is coming on two years of catastrophe. How long will it take before we begin to connect the dots? For as smart as we are and as sophisticated as we are, we can be pretty obtuse. The line from Scripture is that there are none so blind as those who will not see. There is much laid out before us. Let us begin this new year by choosing to place our faith once again in the Living God and embrace the way of Jesus Christ in all its particularities. Not pick and choose. Not decide what works for us. But in a spirit of obedience and a spirit of humility. In a spirit of having been brought low by the ravages of this pandemic. In a spirit of raw emotion. In a spirit of nowhere else to turn. Why not re-turn. To the One who gave us life. Loved us. Saved us. And left us a way to live in this world. A way which works even if it isn’t always easy. I pray the blessings of Jesus Christ upon you all at the beginning of this New Year. I hope and pray we come to our senses before we do some irreparable damage.

Peace,  
Msgr. McHenry