

**Dear Sisters and Brothers,**

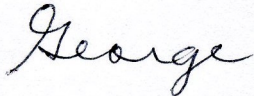
A happy and holy new year to all of you! We begin the new calendar year by observing two seemingly unrelated things. We honor Mary as the Mother of God and at the same time we observe the World Day of Prayer for Peace. One is a doctrinal feast; the other springs from a deep human hunger. Yet they are nonetheless related. They come together through the core statement of Mary's faith: "With God all things are possible."

Indeed, with Mary, it is our belief that nothing is impossible with God. That belief impels us to make the effort to forgive injuries and to seek reconciliation after a quarrel. In the long run, it is our yearning for peace that is the clearest sign of hope for our world, for it is the Spirit's doing. When the small acts of reconciliation we manage as individuals reach a critical mass, who knows what God can make of them? Perhaps peace will spread like a benign mushroom cloud, enveloping this whole wounded planet and transforming it into the Kingdom of God. And isn't that a lovely dream with which to begin a new calendar year?

A new year brings with it once again the cycle of new possibilities. As we pray as a Marianist Family during this month, when we recognize our founding Mother and Father in a special way, let us be filled with hope. May that hope permeate our lives and give us the strength we all need to be messengers and witnesses of hope in our world!

Attached to this e-mail is a list of liturgical celebrations for January.

Affectionately yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "George".

George J. Cerniglia, S.M.  
Assistant for Religious Life