

New Year's Greetings from Cupertino!

On New Year's eve we had our traditional Holy Hour and I was very mindful of our extended community as we shared our expressions of thanksgiving for the past and hope for the future in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament. The night was cold but the first day of the New Year was bright with a cloudless blue sky. At mass our guest and celebrant Father Tim Eden spoke about the New Year as a journey.

I wrote last month's report just before the funeral of Father David Schuyler. The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated at the Church of Saint Joseph of Cupertino with Father Paul Marshall presiding and Bishops P.J. McGrath and Richard Garcia present. The mass was well attended by clergy, family and friends. At the same hour a mass was celebrated in our community chapel for those who could not easily go to our parish church. A driving rain forced us to have the burial service in the cemetery chapel. Father Dave's lifelong friend, Father Bill Marshall, presided. Lunch at the Marianist Center followed.

The next morning I went to Saint Louis for the meeting of the Aging with Grace Committee where we discussed the recent workshops and again studied ways of promoting ongoing formation, including senior Marianists.

From there I went to Dallas for the final meeting of the Task Force on Sponsorship. We celebrated the feast of the Immaculate Conception – praying with and for the worldwide Marianist family in the context of our meeting. The work of nearly two years of meetings and videoconferences is now in the hands of the Provincial Council as they continue their work of implementing the Strategic Plan popularly known as VISION 2020. At the end of the meeting of the Task Force Father Marty Solma, Provincial, presented each of us with an icon of Jesus and the Beloved Disciple. Upon my return to Cupertino, I asked Grace – Santa's helper – to have it framed and added to the other Christmas gifts she had prepared for us to be opened at our Christmas party.

I began the season of Advent in Saint Louis and we were well along the way by the time I returned to Cupertino bringing greetings from many - the committee on Aging with Grace, the Maryland Avenue Community and the Office Staff in Saint Louis, and the Task Force on Sponsorship. I missed Brother John Samaha's birthday but I was here for the first Cupertino birthday of Brother Tom Redmond. This Advent Season was one of the shortest possible so we cruised through 12-12-12 and calmly survived 12-21-12. Community and staff joined for a pre-Christmas luncheon.

We had an Advent Reconciliation Service one day and an Anointing another – and then suddenly the Christmas marathon began concluding with a superb Christmas Day dinner. Decorations inside and out were creative and attractive but it seemed that kings outnumbered shepherds – and this year no sheep or camels were allowed in chapel. Brother Tom Deasy's music boxes in our wing competed with Brother Howard's carols in chapel. There were many activities in house and beyond during the month. Each year the *Singers from around the Bay* are a big hit. Some of us accepted the invitation from Maryknoll to join them for a concert by the *Los Altos Main Street Singers*. Brother John Samaha took groups to see the Christmas lights in the neighborhood and downtown with Brother Jim Leahy as photographer and Father Tom Deasy as commentator. Father Ted Ley made a brief visit which included a progress report on the new community in Los Angeles.

Brother Joe Nu'uanu was in and out of the hospital twice. At present he is home hoping to regain strength. Father George Onida was also hospitalized, but briefly. Because our assignments are indicated by initials some refer to Father George as the GO-GO priest. He recovered so well that he joined the after Christmas exodus, making a brief visit with relatives in Phoenix. One night Father Larry Mann was so weakened that Brother Tom asked Father Ray to anoint him. After a rough night, however, he recovered strength to eat his favorite breakfast "Eggs Benedict" and found new life. He continued to decline however, but when the prospect of hospice care was raised he recovered vigor! When awake he is quite alert and he really comes alive when Brother John Samaha reads his mail to him. This year the Brothers were included in the invitation to the Bishop's traditional open house for clergy. Unfortunately a nasty rainstorm limited attendance, but for those of us who could make it, a good time was had and I enjoyed seeing old friends from the years when I served the diocese as Vicar for Clergy.

Father Ray Malley came up with two memorable comments at mass. Noting that Saint Peter Canisius died in Fribourg, he added "as to be expected." The second was a serious comment linking the massacre of the Holy Innocents with the slaughter at Newtown. For several days Brother John Haster had our flag at half-mast as an expression of solidarity with the nation in sorrow.

May we go through the New Year together with a great sense of wonder.

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