Prayer for the New Year

January 1, 2012

As we celebrate a new year in which our world is so filled with tension, terrorism, economic distress, and natural disasters, let us pray to the Prince of Peace and Mary, the Mother of God. Like Mary, may we each be "stars" of peace, hope, and light, leading others to the one true source of Peace.

Hymn: "The Tiny Child of Bethlehem Came" (Marty Haugen from Welcome the Child) or another appropriate Christmas season hymn.

The tiny child of Bethlehem came that all of the world might turn
To care for ev'ry creature the same, the way of compassion to learn.

When truth becomes the light of our way, when peace is the gift we share,
When love is more than words that we say, the spirit of Jesus is there.

And see within his shining eyes a God who is near at hand,
A God whose wisdom baffles the wise so only the child understands.

Let all creation echo and ring in praise of the infant small.
Now lift your hearts and voices to sing and welcome the child in us all.

Psalm of Thanksgiving

Antiphon: "And there shall be a new heaven and a new earth.... God will wipe away all tears from their eyes" (Rev. 21: 1,4)

Blessed are you, Lord our God, who gives spice to life with change. Lord and Source of all gifts, we rejoice in the fullness of your holy generosity.

We thank you especially now for the gift of change, the gift of newness,
That opens doors closed by habit and routine.

We bless you and thank you as well for that which is stable and unchanging, For the ancient and traditional which give meaning to the new and different.

We thank you, O End of All Longing, for the capacity for change in our lives, For without change there can be no real growth and no true life.

We are grateful in this prayer for those persons who, through their gifts Of excitement and adventure, have taught us not to fear change, not to resist the new.

We are thankful for your Son, your Sacred Word, who spoke to us of new wine skins And who calls us daily to a new kingdom and to a new covenant. May our hearts be ever-changing, ever in growth, as we journey to you, Our Mysterious Source, you who are forever fresh and new, yet forever the same.

Blessed are you, Lord our God, who gives spice to life with change. Amen.


Prayer for Openness (selected verses)

Antiphon: "Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good" (Rom. 12: 21).

God of spaciousness, reach into my inner space, Sweep out the old clutter, enlarge my capacity to receive.

Bringer of truth, empty me of whatever impedes The growth of our relationship. Help me recognize and accept your sources for my growth.

Creator of the seasons of life, soften my resistance to emptying. May I welcome each inner season as a catalyst for my transformation….
Bringer of Good and Giver of Growth, we yearn to be open and receptive to your generosity. [During this New Year of 2012], may we trust your presence amidst the cycle of emptying and filling.


**Reading:** "Recipe for the New Year " (Anonymous)

Take twelve fine, full-grown months; see that these are thoroughly free from old memories of bitterness, rancor and hate, cleanse them completely from every clinging spite; pick off all specks of pettiness and littleness; in short, see that these months are freed from all the past—have them fresh and clean as when they first came from the great storehouse of Time. Cut these months into thirty or thirty-one equal parts. Do not attempt to make up the whole batch at one time (so many persons spoil the entire lot this way) but prepare one day at a time.

Into each day put equal parts of faith, patience, courage, work (some people omit this ingredient and so spoil the flavor of the rest), hope, fidelity, liberality, kindness, rest (leaving this out is like leaving the oil out of the salad dressing—don’t do it), prayer, meditation, and one well-selected resolution. Put in about one teaspoonful of good spirits, a dash of fun, a pinch of folly, a sprinkling of play, and a heaping cupful of good humor.


**Response:**

*O Prince of Peace, open us to your grace this year.*

- *O Prince of Peace, open us to your grace this year.*

*Help us to live each moment fully in your light.*
- Each moment fully in your light.
Glory to you, Source of all Being, Eternal Word and Holy Spirit.
- O Prince of Peace, open us to your grace this year.

*Benedictus or Magnificat:* (e.g. English & Spanish "Magnificat" from Tatiana's *Emmanuel: The Story of Christmas*)

*Spontaneous Intercessions…*

*Our Father* (holding hands)

*Closing Prayer:* (Joyce Rupp)

God of this new year, we are walking into mystery. We face the future, not knowing what the days and months will bring to us or how we will respond. Be love in us as we journey. May we welcome all who come our way. Deepen our faith to see all of life through your eyes. Fill us with hope and an abiding trust that you dwell in us amid all our joys and sorrows. Thank you for the treasure of our faith life. Thank you for the gift of being able to rise each day with the assurance of your walking through the day with us. God of this near year, we praise you. AMEN.