

**January 1, 2012**

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**John 3:16-17:** *For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.*

Good Morning and Happy New Year.

Like many other Christian festivals the celebration of New Year's Day in the West started before the church came into existence. At first the Romans celebrated the New Year on March 1, But Julius Caesar instituted New Years Day on Jan 1 to honor Janus, the two faced god who looked backwards into the old year and forward into the new. Somewhat like the image of the New Year's Father Time usually depicted as an elderly bearded man, dressed in a robe, carrying a scythe and an hourglass or other timekeeping device (an image which represents time), constant one-way movement, an image of [Chronos](#), the Greek god of time in Greek mythology who typically hands over the duties of time to the baby [New Year](#).

“With the celebration of the New Year with the Romans the custom of 'New Years Resolutions' began. The Romans would make resolutions based on moral issues especially the resolution to be good to others. And when Rome took on Christianity as its official faith, the Christians kept New Year's Day, only they substituted the moral resolution to fasting and prayer aimed at living the New Year in the New Life of Christ.”

Many of us have looked at the New Year as a time to reflect, pray and perhaps make a New Year's Resolution, or to dedicate ourselves anew. During the season of Advent and leading up to Christmas we have had the time to dedicate ourselves to God incarnate. We prepared and reflected on the Christ child and who that child is to us.

Today, New Year's Day: is a time for us to think about planning to do the things the God wants us to do in this New Year. It is a time to reflect on the Advent images we have heard about and the Christ Child and the Hope that He brings to us In this New Year.

**Time.** We are all focused on Time. We set the alarm clock to get up in the morning so we will not be late for work or school. We look at our watches to be sure we will be able to pick up the kids from school or when we will eat our meals. We know how many minutes it takes to get from our house to church each Sunday and if we leave a few minutes later than we should we will be Late and Not on Time for Church!

How appropriate to talk about Time on New's Years Day. Every New Year's Eve people count down the time until midnight at Times Square. We talk about what we do with our time and plan our time for the New Year. I would like for you to think about time.. but not time that you watch and look at. I want you to think about God's time, a word described as Kairos.

The ancient Greeks had two words for time, [chronos](#) and [kairos](#). Chronos refers to chronological or sequential time, whereas Kairos (καιρός) is an ancient Greek word meaning the "right or opportune moment". A word to signify "time in between", "a moment of indeterminate time in which something special happens". In the New Testament, kairos means "the appointed time in the purpose of God", the time when God acts.

Today, New Years' day, begins a season of opportunity, a "kairos" season, a time for living fully. A Time to find God in our lives. Today is the time to be with God. Kairos is the "fullness of time," God's time. "God's purpose intersecting and overruling this finite world of chronological time".

When Jesus came to us for the first time, in the stable in Bethlehem to Mary and Joseph, to the animals, to the shepherds; so long ago it was a definite "kairos" moment—a time of fulfillment, a time for God's promises to be fulfilled.... in which God, who promised before the beginning of time and at His appointed "kairos" time when God interacts and enters into "chronos" time, (chronological time). As a human form, Jesus the Christ Child comes to us. From John 3:17 'Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.' Kairos! This is a time of expectation and excitement, a time of decision.

Let us begin the new year in "Kairos" time. Set aside time each day to find God in your life. Take that time to pray and ask God to show you the things He hopes for you to do in the coming year... May this new year be a time to reflect and think about what the past year has brought and what the new year can bring.

May you take time each day to remember the Christ Child and to keep the season of Christmas; The Hope, Peace, Love and Joy of the Christ Child in your heart all year long.

For Today Your "**Kairos**" time has come.

Amen.

## **A New Year Prayer**

God of our yesterdays, our today, and our tomorrows:  
We praise You for Your unequalled greatness.  
Thank You for the year behind us and for the year ahead.  
Help us in this new year, to fret less and laugh more.

(Silence)

Christ, in your Mercy,  
Hear our Prayer

Help us to teach others to love by loving them.  
Knowing, when Love came to the stable in Bethlehem, He came for us.  
So that Love could be with us, and we could know You.  
That we could share Love with others.  
Help us, to hear Your love song in every sunrise,  
in the chirping of sparrows in our backyards,  
in the stories of our old folks, and the fantasies of our children.  
Help us to stop and listen to You,  
so that we may know You better and better.

(Silence)

Christ, in your Mercy,  
Hear our Prayer.

We rejoice in the world You loved into being.  
Thank You for another new year and for new chances every day.  
We pray for peace, for light, and for hope,  
that we might spread them to others.  
Be with those who are lonely and sad in the midst of other's joy,  
for the sick in body, mind, spirit and relationships,

(Silence)

Christ, in your Mercy,  
Hear our Prayer.

We leave the past in your hands,  
and step out into the unknown new year knowing  
You will go with us.  
Help us to accept Your gift of a new year and rejoice in what's ahead,

Amen.