

New Year Resolutions for 2019

By Father John Catoir JCD, -Dec.6, 2018

If at first you don't succeed, try, try again. Here we are trying to stay on the path to holiness with a selection of my favorite New Year Resolutions. Pick one or more that appeals to you, and good luck.

1. Put God first- St. Paul said, "All of you, who are believers, have the same divine calling. Turn your minds to Jesus the High Priest and be as faithful to your Heavenly Father as He was."- Hebrews 3:1.
2. Put aside your fears- "Fear is useless, what you need is trust." This is a call to be courageous. Jesus is asking you to be calm in midst of the storms of life. Do this not only for your own peace of mind, but for the well-being of those who look up to you. Show them that by relying on the promises of Christ, God will give them the courage to be dependable in all circumstances.
3. Put on the will to pray more-St. Augustine said, "Our hearts are restless until they rest in Thee O Lord." Begin by accepting the fact that loneliness is part of the human condition. You feel alone at times because your soul is longing for the living God. Even married couples experience loneliness because loneliness is the price we pay for being unique. We are utterly different and apart from others. Thinking about God's love can calm you down, and ease your sorrows.
4. Put yourself in, and stay in the present moment- Jesus said, "In this world you will have many troubles, but cheer up for I have overcome the world." Avoid the temptation to let the past drag you down. Relax and trust the future to God's Providence.
5. Put yourself on the straight and narrow- "Seek first the Kingdom of Heaven, and all things will be added to you." This is the centerpiece of all our resolutions. Each of us has to figure out how to do it best. Don't be discouraged if you slip now and then. A resolution, after all, is aspirational. You'll keep some, and in the rush of life, let some slip away. If that happens begin again.

I'll leave you with Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi to ponder wisely.

“Lord, make me an instrument of your peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; and where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love.

For it is giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; and in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen.”

I’ll conclude with a story about the time I flubbed this prayer during an important ceremony. Margaret Heckler, who was the Secretary of Health and Human Services, a friend from High School, was being sworn in by Vice-President George H.W. Bush to be the next Ambassador to Ireland. Toward the end, I recited this prayer from memory as I had done hundreds of times before, and suddenly my mind went blank. I was very embarrassed but soon recovered. After the ceremony, Vice-President Bush leaned over to me and said jokingly, “Don’t worry about it Father.”

Happy New Year!