

New Year's Day 2022
Numbers 6.22-27///Gal. 4.4-7///Luke 2.16-21

→have you ever noticed....we have an insatiable appetite for new things....

→we are constantly asking one another “what’s new”....television, the internet...and every other form of communication does well to keep us up to date on the latest happenings...

→we search constantly to find out what new things are out there....

→[and] there are “new” things that are worth celebrating: a new job, a new car, a new outfit

→while other “new” things may be approached with a guarded optimism: a new acquaintance, a new teacher, a new president

→then there are other “new” things that are cause for no celebration at all: a new pain somewhere, a new bill we weren’t expecting, a new health diagnosis ... **a lingering pandemic.**

→however among all of the many new things we face in life...a NEW YEAR is always welcomed with great joy, enthusiasm, expectation, and hope.

→most of us always approach a New Year as something worth celebrating...but this New Year rings all the more true as we embark on untested time that will hopefully bring prosperity and goodness, health and well-being, happiness and joy...

→and so it is good for us to begin right here....where we are now...gathering in church...to celebrate God’s blessings

PAUSE

→today’s first reading is one that we are all familiar with as it is sometimes used as a final blessing at Mass

→ it is the blessing used by Aaron the high priest, the brother of Moses, blessing God's people as they prepared for their journey to the promised land.

→ then.....as we hear in the Gospel... the angels have sung and the shepherds have come....the holy family is together...starting a new life, creating new memories and beginning a journey unlike any family has ever taken.

→ however.....nestled in this Gospel passage today...is an insight into our Lord's mother; her character; manner **and [her]** strength

→ on this day, we hear words spoken of Mary, the Mother of God, and her response to all that has taken place around the birth of her son...that... "*she treasured all of these things...reflecting on them in her heart.*"

→ [in reality]....there really.....is no greater story to tell, no more valuable treasure to store up in our hearts.....than the Good News that God has come among us in Jesus Christ.

→ and that is what we celebrate today on this first day of the New Year.

PAUSE

→ 2021 certainly had its ups and downs.

→ it presented us with challenges, trials, adversities, and ordeals ...

→ the pandemic continued to impact and influence every aspect of our lives

→ however for all the disappointments and hardships that 2021 gave us...it also produced some blessings and good things that I think we need to remember and be grateful for:

→ we rediscovered our imagination and creativity

→ it allowed us to uncover a new appreciation for a simple and unassuming way of life

→and hopefully it made us appreciate the privilege and blessing when we gather, celebrate and receive the Eucharist.

→so in spite of all the challenges the past 12 months have presented to us...there have been some blessings and goodness that has lead us to this day.

→a New Year of hope and expectation, optimism, and courage.

PAUSE

→today we see Mary...taking to heart...her witness of the miracle that is Christmas

→she quietly and beautifully treasures in her heart all these things that tell the story of Jesus

→even though she could not have possibly understood everything that was to lay ahead...for herself, and her child

→on this day....**they** started a new path in life //// a new hope //// and a new confidence

→today on this DAY (2022 years later) we too begin a new path, a new hope...and a new confidence to spread and live the mission and message of Jesus Christ

→...we have been given another New Year to ponder the presence of God in our lives.

→another opportunity to treasure the presence of Christ among us.....

PAUSE

→may we, like Mary, truly hope to make a difference this year in our lives...and strive to live the challenges of the Gospel message each and every day....cherishing these times....and celebrating them with joy....

→May 2021 bring God's blessings and peace...health and well-being...to our families,
community and to our [Church] parish of Saint William...

→and may God continue the Good Work started in each of us.....in this coming year!