

Rejoice in the Lord

**By Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R.
Archbishop of Newark**

God is the merciful source of peace and justice for all



We begin each new year with a fervent prayer for peace. We long for the world of tomorrow, the time when there will be no more discord among individuals, families, neighbors or nations. Having just celebrated the birth of the Prince of Peace, we hope that His coming will inspire us all to live differently. We begin each new year with the profound hope that we can set aside our jealousy, our fear, our desire for economic control and political domination, our aversion to strangers from foreign lands and our discomfort with those who are different from us. We pray for peace, forgetting that mercy, the way of the meek, is the only way to peace.

Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called children of God (Mt 5:9). We become children of God when we are reconciled to Him—through our Baptism and our Communion with Him in and through the Church. But when we lose sight of God, through our blindness, selfishness and sin, there can be no peace. Injustice, violence and cruelty dominate the world order, and peace disintegrates—in our hearts and homes, in our neighborhoods and nations and throughout the world.

True peace, the peace that lasts, happens when we work for justice. It is the product of the hard work of civilization, the rule of law and the right-ordering of social structures. Peace requires fairness, respect for human dignity and the refusal to take advantage of another's weakness. As Pope Paul VI said on the World Day of Peace (January 1) in 1972, "If you want peace, work for justice." And that means this work must be done both here at home and around the world.

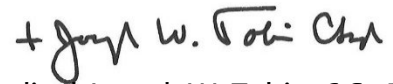
Lasting peace—the kind that is more than a temporary ceasefire or a periodic break between hostile actions—is the effect of charity. There is no real peace without mercy or without the willingness to sacrifice our individual or collective self-interests for the sake of genuine harmony. If we want peace, we must let go of our desire for revenge, and we must be willing to let old wounds heal through the saving grace of God's mercy.

This is one reason that four years ago, in 2016, our Holy Father, Pope Francis, proclaimed a Year of Mercy. In the papal bull *Misericordiae Vultus* (The Face of Mercy), Pope Francis explains how in Jesus Christ the mercy of God has been revealed to people of every nation, language and culture. This is the great mystery we celebrate this Sunday, the Epiphany of the Lord.

Peace will happen when we can share God's love and mercy with all our sisters and brothers throughout the world. When that day comes, nations will unite in a world order that respects the fundamental human rights and authentic cultural diversity of nations and peoples. Neighbors will help and respect one another. Families will live together joyfully. And each woman and man on earth will be calm, untroubled and at peace.

Have a blessed New Year!

Sincerely yours in Christ the Redeemer,



Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R.
Archbishop of Newark

Recent Tragedies in the Archdiocese

Statement of Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R., Regarding the Tragic Death of Jersey City Police Detective Joseph Seals (December 17, 2019)

Over the past week, we all have been conscious of the power of darkness, which has tried to overshadow us and strangle our hearts. We also are aware of the difference that light makes in triumphing over darkness. Today, we come together as a community and reflect a light so bright that no darkness can vanquish it. Our faith in Jesus Christ, the Holy Redeemer, is what will help the family, friends, and loved ones of Jersey City Police Detective Joseph Seals to persevere through their grief. In the words of Saint Paul in his letter to the Romans, "If we live, we live for the Lord; and if we die, we die for the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord."

I ask all the faithful to pray with me for the eternal life of Detective Seals and for strength and comfort for his family in their heartbreaking loss. I extend my personal condolences to them. May God bless Detective Seals and may his good deeds on this earth always be remembered.

Eternal rest grant to him, O Lord; and let perpetual light shine upon him. May his soul, and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.

Update on Most Blessed Sacrament Church in Franklin Lakes (December 12, 2019)

The following is an update on Mass and other parish activities at Most Blessed Sacrament in Franklin Lakes following the devastating fire that destroyed the church on December 11.

Sunday Masses, including the 5:30 p.m. Saturday Vigil Mass, will be held in the gymnasium at the Academy of the Most Blessed Sacrament. Daily Mass, including the 9:00 a.m. Saturday Mass, will be held in the parish center.

There is no change to the frequency of Masses or times. Visit online at **mostblessedsacrament.ws** or consult the church bulletin for Mass schedules.

All major holiday Masses also will be celebrated in the school gymnasium.

While weddings and funeral Masses will be relocated to neighboring parishes, Most Blessed Sacrament staff will continue to coordinate music and logistics for these events. The Sacrament of Baptism will be celebrated in the gymnasium during Masses.

There is no change to the many parish ministries of Most Blessed Sacrament, which take place in the parish center and at other facilities.

Our Academy of the Most Blessed Sacrament, a Blue-Ribbon School serving students in Grades Pre-K through 8 on the same property as the parish, was not directly affected by the fire.

For more information visit Most Blessed Sacrament's website and Facebook page.



As the Archbishop of Newark, I have an obligation to do whatever is necessary to help us rebuild and flourish as the Body of Christ, the Church. We also need to provide an example for others to follow.

After two years of careful listening to the concerns expressed by the people of the Archdiocese, and following consultations with archdiocesan and parish leaders and professionals in a variety of specialized areas (including in communications, education, leadership, pastoral planning, stewardship education, and fundraising), I share **Forward in Faith Together: Our Road Ahead**, our vision for the future of the Archdiocese supported by six key pillars, each representing an area of action that calls for our renewed energy.

- Protection of the Faithful
- Accountability, Transparency, and Communication
- Archdiocesan Pastoral Planning
- Lifelong Faith Formation and Education
- Ongoing Formation/Support of Clergy
- Active Engagement of the Laity

I look forward to working with you and our entire Archdiocese on **Forward in Faith Together: Our Road Ahead**. Please include these efforts in your prayer and adopt these priorities to your parish life. For more information, please visit our website: **forward.rcan.org**.

A Message from Pope Francis: Words of Challenge and Hope



Mercy is the beating heart of the Gospel. How much I desire that the year to come will be steeped in mercy, so that we can go out to every man and woman, bringing the goodness and tenderness of God.

May the balm of mercy reach everyone, both believers and those far away, as a sign that the kingdom of God is already present in our midst. Nothing in the Church's preaching or witness should be lacking in mercy. (From *Misericordiae Vultus*, The Face of Mercy, 2016)

My Prayer for you

My prayer for you—and for all our brothers and sisters—is that we will know peace in 2020. May the violence we have experienced in our Archdiocese and throughout the world end and the peace of Christ be with us always. Through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Queen of Peace, and all the saints, may we find happiness and joy in working for justice and in sharing with others in Jesus' name God's abundant mercy. Through the experience of God's mercy, may we share this peace with people from all nations and cultures everywhere! †



Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R.

