

## ***Challenge of a New Year***

We are at the end of another year. Soon, this year will take its place among so many others that have come before it. Time passes, the years come and go, and we come and go with them. Nevertheless, we must make a strong and absolute resolution that, if our Lord gives us the coming year, we will make a better use of it than the years that are past.

Let us walk with a renewed step in the service of God and one another. Let us renew our efforts to grow in our perfection. Let us take great courage to earnestly labor and master ourselves, and to purify ourselves of those things which prevent us from being more of who God calls us to be.

It is easy to begin a new year. It is not so easy to put our hands to the work that God expects of us during a new year. To begin the year without tending to our labors is to run the risk of allowing yet another year to slip by without any profit to our soul. Don't let this happen to you; rather, consider how well you are making use of each and every present moment that God gives you.

We are growing older and drawing nearer to death every day. Our days, months and years flow on, ultimately coming to an end. How should we respond to this reality? Do what is good and hope in the Lord! Let us embrace our state and stage of life in the best way we can. Let us employ the time that God gives us with great care. While we ultimately must depend and rely upon God's mercy, let us at the same time remember to do as much good as we can in the time that God gives us now.

So, let us begin this New Year in the name of our Lord. Let us resolve to do the best we can with what ever little we possess. While God wants only what we can do, God clearly expects us to do what we can. Therefore, let us be careful to give what is due to God and to one another: let us do what is good, and place our hope and confidence in God's infinite compassion.

(January 1, 2003)

*(Based upon an exhortation by St. Jane de Chantal given on the last Saturday of December, 1629. See the original and entire text in St. Jane Frances Fremyot de Chantal: Her Exhortations, Conferences and Instructions. Westminster, MD: Newman Bookshop, 1947, page 106.)*

***May this new year of 2015 be a year of health and happiness; peace and prosperity; love and laughter for you and your family.***

***Happy New Year!***