

The earth threw a party last night and everybody showed up. The two greatest fears were never realized. No international terrorism. No Y2K bug. Instead the two greatest hopes were realized. People all over the world celebrated the advent of the 2000s. And Christians increased their awareness that the meaning behind the calendar is Jesus Christ, the center of all time.

The celebration truly was global. Through technology, we took part in events happening all around the world, time zone by time zone. The entire day caught us into the sweep of time and the universality of the human spirit. Celebration and joy characterized the day. Even the pope stayed up for midnight. Here at St. Regis about 150 members of all ages came to sing, dance, play games, count down the seconds and toast the new year. Then we gathered in our church in the name of the entire parish, to devote the first hour of the 2000s to what we're here to do, the celebration of the mass.

The big prayers got answered. The prayers for peace, for the freedom of hostages. The prayers for a new beginning and for unity. Even the prayers for good weather. This holy year has begun in jubilee.

When Matthew wrote the story of the magi, he used it to show that the meaning of Christmas affected everyone, even astrologers from a far-off land. Paul told the Ephesians the shocking news that the covenant of Abraham no longer pertained to Jews alone: "the Gentiles are coheirs, members of the same body, and copartners in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel." Jesus made this radical contribution to the history of religions: His incarnation and resurrection established everyone as sisters and brothers under one God, beyond time and space.

The spirit of 2000 is making that mystery alive before our very eyes and it challenges us to live in unity. Do you harbor racial prejudice? Do you resent people who drive slowly? Do in-laws or stepfamilies make your stomach turn? Do you think Protestants are going to hell? Do you think public school kids are nothing but troublemakers? Do you think all teenagers are devil worshipers? This jubilee is for you. May it be an epiphany for all of us, a manifestation of the unity we all find in Christ.