

# Solemnity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, The Mother of God New Year's 2009

QUEEN OF PEACE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY  
GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA  
Rev. Jeff McGowan

+++++

I read that last New Year's Eve a couple turned in early. They were awakened by smoke and discovered a fire in their kitchen. It was too big to put out on their own so they called the fire department, got warm clothes and pulled their cars out of the garage. They watched as the firemen put out the fire. The husband turned to his wife thinking she would need to be comforted as their kitchen burned but she had a big smile. He was incredulous! "How could you be smiling," he asked. She said, "Honey, do you realize this is the first time we've gone out on New Year's Eve *in years!*"

I appreciate you coming to Mass to begin this New Year. Last night at midnight I went outside to look to the sky for fireworks. I expected to hear the pop of fireworks and firecrackers. But there was another sound; maybe you heard it as well. It was like a huge collective sigh of relief. We finally made it through 2008! There were good things in 2008; but, frankly, it seemed it would never end.

Now, though, we are on the threshold of a new dawn. I can identify the feelings of Mary and Joseph with their new born son. Times were not good then either. But they knew something great was happening and something that would change the way things had been. And they knew they were part of it.

It may not be as dramatic, but, for us it is dramatic. We are going into a new year. Here is the opportunity for new growth, new life, new hope, new joy and new faith. If we count our blessings, remember all God has done for us in all our lives, we know we can count on God to bless us with good things. If we focus on all we have been given, we won't have time to dwell on all we've lost. The world is changing and we are part of it. And may 2009 be filled with good news for all of us!