A New Year's Prayer

Tonight, we say goodbye to 2019. Some – who faced hardships and the loss of loved ones – will be glad to see it gone. Others will delight in the happiness it brought – perhaps through marriage, the birth of a child, a new job or a promotion.

For most of us, 2019 was a blend of setbacks and successes, defeats and victories, sadness and cheerfulness. Then comes 2020, with its hopes, dreams and anticipation.

We all want it to be a year filled with joy. Recently, I ran across a prayer by Thomas Becket (1119 – 1170), also known as Saint Thomas of Canterbury (he was the Archbishop of Canterbury from 1162 until his murder in 1170). It is a prayer we should all adopt as our own. Here it is:

May God make your year a happy one!

Not by shielding you from all sorrow and pain,
But by strengthening you to bear it as it comes;

Not by making your path easy,
But by making you sturdy to travel any path;

Not by taking hardships from you,
But by taking fear from your heart;

Not by granting you unbroken sunshine,
But by keeping your face bright, even in the shadows;

Not by making your life always pleasant,
But by showing you when people and their causes need you most,
And by making you anxious to be there to help.

And may I add my own prayer for you: May God grant you love, peace, hope and joy for the year ahead.

The Apostle Paul offers this assurance as you plunge into 2020:

For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength (Philippians 4:13 NLT).

– Beecher Hunter