

Pastor Bill Mugnolo

St. John/Zion Parish

August 2020 Newsletter Article: "If I Could Turn Back Time ..."

As I am writing this to you, it is near the end of July. In recent years, as a way, in part, to look forward to cooler days ahead, many businesses have celebrated "Christmas in July". When I lived in New York State, one radio station, on the weekend closest to July 25th, did a whole weekend of Christmas music (as if constant Christmas music from early November through late December wasn't enough!).

Well if July 25th is "Christmas", that would, I guess, mean that August 1st could be celebrated as a summer version of "New Year's Day". Wouldn't we, especially this year, want to turn back the clock and remember what it was like back on January 1, 2020? It then was a brand-new decade with a roaring economy. Then came Covid-19, the resulting shutdown, and widespread unemployment. Then came protests, unrest, and all forms of still ongoing civil disorder in the aftermath of George Floyd's tragic death. With all that has gone on, who wouldn't want to turn back the clock!

"If I could turn back time"... the renowned singer Cher once sang. But this we cannot do. Each day is a new day, complete with challenges of its own (Matthew 6:34). These days have been especially been challenging for us as Christ's "little flock" here on earth (Luke 12:32). Still, in that verse, Jesus tells us, "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom." The Prophet Jeremiah, even as he mourned the total destruction of Jerusalem, proclaimed, "But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope: The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; His mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness" (Lamentations 3:21-23).

Yes, the Lord remains faithful to us in our two congregations during these very trying times. He has been with us during our full "pandemic mode" when all our ministries were online from mid-March until late-June. He continues to be with us in our "hybrid format" where our services and Bible Studies are both available in person and online. For those of you who have chosen to remain home for the time being, I want you to know that I can bring Holy Communion to you in a sanitary, socially distant set-up. If you would like to receive the Lord's Supper at home, please don't hesitate to contact me at (585) 472-0266 (cell phone) or at pastor.mugnolo@yahoo.com (my personal e-mail).

"If I could turn back time" ... Amidst a troubled world which, each day, grows one day closer to the end, "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever" (Hebrews 13:8). May we rest all our hopes upon the unchanging Christ!

Your Brother in Christ,

Pastor Bill