



# Cathedral Basilica of Our Lady of Peace

Cathedral of the Honolulu Diocese • Founded 1843 • National Historic Register

## **Solemnity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God**

January 1, 2023

Beloved Disciples of Christ,

Happy New Year!

*“Mary kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart.” (Lk. 2:19)*

A week ago, the whole world celebrated the nativity of Jesus, our Lord, and Redeemer. Like the shepherds who watched their flocks at night, we were filled with jubilant hearts, praising God for His wonderful gift of His Son. Beautiful Christmas carols were heard, gifts shared, and churches were filled to celebrate this joyous occasion of our salvation.

Today, we gather again to celebrate another joyous occasion, and this time celebrate Jesus’ mother, the Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God. We all heard or read during the season of Advent how she was chosen and how she opened up herself to be the Mother of God, Jesus Christ, the Second Person of the Trinity. Her YES to the invitation to bear Jesus in her womb presents to us her humbling spirit, openness to the will of God and the sacrifice she had to bear with trust in God. How wonderful it is that on this first day of the New Year 2023, we come to honor an exemplary model of faith and devotion to God.

Although it is wonderful to make New Year’s Resolutions, especially those that pertain to maintaining health, saving money for the future, concentrating on work, studies, and more, let us remember to make Resolutions that can deeply change our lives, our relationship with God, family, friends, and strangers. Resolutions that can truly bring peace and harmony by learning to forgive from the heart and extend graciously help to those who are in need. Also, Resolutions that, like Mary, have an open heart to follow God’s law of love, live in truth and promote justice and peace.

As much as we are hopeful for a better life and things to come with the New Year at hand, we will face many challenges along the way. Our current pandemic still lingers on and will continue to threaten our lives if we do not take extra care and caution. The current economic crises that many are experiencing today when families can hardly make ends meet. Our family members could be hooked up to vice, and relationships are challenged to keep going in marriage and life. Many are suffering because of war and strife. The lack of protection of God’s creation due to ecological imbalance and more so with the threat of life from conception to natural death due to the degradation of moral values and sacredness of life. And the list will go on. It is the sad reality that our world is embracing today, but when we keep focusing and centering our lives on Jesus and Mary, we hope for a better world.

We often hear that if we begin well, all things will end well. We hope that as we begin the New Year 2023, we begin well through the example of Mary.

May our Blessed Mother journey with us throughout the year, comforting us during our challenging times and hovering over us with her love and care for a dear child like her Son, Jesus.

Your friend in Jesus,

Fr. Pascual