

Family and friends, as we spot the end of 2009 on the horizon, we look back, take stock, and begin looking forward to what's to come in 2010 and beyond. To some extent it has seemed like we've been stuck in 2008, as this year did not produce any considerable change when it came to the economy, the real estate market, the job market, or the war. But surely we were treated to some memorable moments. There were some firsts: a historical presidential inauguration, a beer summit, the rise and fall of the clunker car, the swine flu protocol: cough-into-sleeve or else…. Some were head-shaking (could've sworn we had more than the predicted amount of full moons this year): the balloon boy fiasco, the "invited" party crashers, those affairs to remember, or more like fatal attractions to forget (how unfaithful and disrespectful a humanity we've become), climategate…climategate? You're kidding me right? We have enough with John&Kate! Some were heart-stopping: the Hudson River landing, the Air France crashing. Others were change-bound: animated town hall meetings, high-spirited rallies, ongoing healthcare entanglements. And some were heart-wrenching: in-your-face Texas-grown terrorism, an obscene amount of missing persons, and way, way too many senseless deaths. Yeap, 2009 has been quite eventful. Of course our year in review must include whatever personal adversities transpired in each of our lives. Definitely we can't forget those.

We can't forget those because as the year nears its end we should look back to remember the lessons learned from them, and reflect on any changes we want, or need, to make and resolve to follow through. I've never been big on New Year resolutions myself, but I will tell you this, that among the things I would like to improve and/or change is the way in which I communicate with those I care about. Too much of the e-mailing texting facebooking blogging thing, and not enough of the phone or face to face live and in person thing. Technology has made me a bit impersonal I admit, and I need to, no, must, do something about that. Gotta balance that out. That's one of my "things" for 2010 I think. What about you, what's yours?

And so as we get ready to say goodbye to 2009 this New Year's Eve, let's grab those hats and noisemakers, and just as the clock strikes midnight, let's clink those champagne glasses

and celebrate having been alive one more year, kissing and hugging to death those around us, phoning those dear ones who are celebrating elsewhere, and if you happen to be at my house, also eating twelve grapes for prosperity, throwing a bucket of water out the front door to wash away the bad of the last year, spraying perfume on your feet for love and romance, and taking a walk outside with a suitcase for future journeys. Never mind that at home we are a practicing Catholic family and put our future first and foremost confidently in God's hands, these traditions are lots of fun and bring added laughter to our celebration. Sure we get kinda wacky looks from some of the neighbors, but only from the ones who aren't already joining us. ;)

But listen, whatever our New Year's Eve traditions, let's be sure to celebrate by ending the old year with respect and beginning the new one in the way we would like it to begin — with love — and let's establish our intentions for the new year, looking not backwards with despair, but forward with hope, oh my gosh yes, lots of hope.

Meanwhile, as this blogger signs off for the year to spend much anticipated quality time with loved ones this holiday season, I leave you with my sincere best wishes for a healthy, peaceful, safe, and happy 2010. May your new year be filled with all the blessings you desire and deserve, and may the good Lord provide you with a daily dose of serenity, strength, courage and wisdom. God bless you and your families.

My love to all.

Promise yourself....
To be so strong that nothing
can disturb your peace of mind.
To talk health, happiness, and prosperity
to every person you meet.

To make all your friends feel
that there is something in them.
To look at the sunny side of everything

and make your optimism come true.

To think only the best, to work only for the best,
and to expect only the best.
To be just as enthusiastic about the success of others
as you are about your own.

To forget the mistakes of the past
and press on to the greater achievements of the future.
To wear a cheerful countenance at all times
and give every living creature you meet a smile.

To give so much time to the improvement of yourself
that you have no time to criticize others.
To be too large for worry, too noble for anger, too strong for fear,
and too happy to permit the presence of trouble.

To think well of yourself and to proclaim this fact to the world,
not in loud words but great deeds.
To live in faith that the whol world is on your side
so long as you are true to the best that is in you.
~ Christian D. Larson

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