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Editorial

Away with the old, welcome to the new.....

Standing at the threshold of a new Millennium people young and old are reflecting on what has been, while simultaneously projecting some vivid imaginations into the future.

- It is natural for young people to focus more on things to come while the elderly will tend to reflect on times past. They may even remember that 1999 was dedicated in their honour with the slogan 'celebrating old age'. As far as I am aware this happened with few highlights in our 'old country Switzerland' as well as in our country of adoption New

Zealand. - No need for us oldies to feel cheated, after all don't we know that such is the 'way of the world', it belongs to the young and to the young at heart..!

- The one thing that the dawning of the new Millennium for young and old alike has deepest meaning for, is the fact, that for all mankind this new timespan contains the passage from life to eternity. To think of death may well be regarded as morbid especially at millennium celebration time, but it forces men and women to ask themselves the fundamental question about the meaning of life itself; what is on the other side of the 'shadowy wall' of death? Does death represent the finite end of life or does something lie beyond that?

Let me share with you the following explanation I came across recently; *For people with Christian beliefs the answer is contained in Christ's resurrection making Him the first witness of eternal life. In Him human hope is shown to be filled with immortality. Christian faith can give light to the mystery of death and it brings serenity to old age as shown by many. Thus the latter years of man's stretch on earth do not have to be lived as the expectation of a calamity but rather with a sense of trusting abandonment into the hands of God. Blessed people, that can use the time of 'old age' to further deepen their spiritual life as an example to others*

In a practical way we must be grateful for all social institutions which attend to old people's physical well-being, their intellectual development and their personal relationships as well as enabling them to make themselves useful and to put their time, talents and experience at the service of others. In this way the capacity to enjoy life reflects the gift from God that it is. The lives of 'good people gone before us' bear witness to the fact that such a capacity to enjoy life in no way conflicts with the desire of eternity, a passage from old life to new life as Christian death represents.

Such people have cast no doubt on the value of earthly life which is beautiful despite limitations and sufferings.

Besides reflecting in the past and looking into the future, the Millennium celebration contains the Birthday celebration of the One whose birth we have traditionally come to mark on the 25th of December. It is opportune to remember that it is the Birthday of Christ himself that gives rise to our Millennium celebrations.

What do you think would the 'Birthday-Child' Jesus Christ wish for the world as a Birthday gift to himself in our day?

- Would it not be His desire that we love each-other as He has demonstrated to love us on the cross?

Would He not wish us to remember more often that prayer He taught his followers and directed to His Father, the prayer we know as the "Lord's prayer"?

You may think otherwise, but I do believe that implementing the effects of His prayer into our world would

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