

Generations

Prayers instead of resolutions for the New Year

The year 2016 will soon arrive, and many of us will begin thinking about New Year's resolutions.

According to the website www.statisticbrain.com, which I figured by its name alone would provide insight into how many of us really make and keep New Year's resolutions, the following were the top 10 for 2015: 1) lose weight, 2) get organized, 3) spend less/save more, 4) enjoy life to the fullest, 5) stay fit and healthy, 6) learn something exciting, 7) quit smoking, 8) help others in their dreams, 9) fall in love, and 10) spend more time with family. Also, according to the site, historically only 8 percent are successful in attaining their resolutions, and I'm in the other 92 percent who always seem to fail miserably.

Perhaps it's time then to chuck the practice of assembling the usual tiresome resolutions and figure out another way to welcome 2016. Rather than concentrating on just me, my shortcomings and what I could do to make myself a better person, I'd concentrate on what the world could do to make itself better.

No small feat, of course. I put together this mega-list, I would need help. So, I decided to choose the power of prayer, something everyone could understand, embrace and participate in.

My first prayer would be to stop the terrorists who have made a black mark on society by promulgating death, destruction and violence as a way to further their cause.

Is any "cause" or belief worth killing or maiming another human being? The attacks in Paris and our own San Bernardino are a far cry from my generation's Nikita Khrushchev banging his shoe on a desk at the United Nations.



**Peg
DeMarco**

We have graduated to global terrorism, and that's a scary

thought because it could be anywhere and everywhere. So, I pray that those who have an inkling or a moment of temporary insanity to do something inhumane to another human being stop and re-evaluate the taking of another person's life.

Would a moment of contemplation stop a terrorist from concocting a bomb or a murderer from brandishing a weapon? Perhaps my Pollyanna rambling is naivety. But I will always have hope, and if one prayer made even one person stop and re-evaluate his or her evil act, think of the good we could do if we all simply prayed.

My next prayer would be for the poor and hungry. Every person in emotional or physical pain needs to receive comfort of some kind, and every adult and child needs to have enough to eat and a safe place to sleep.

That's a tall order as local and national nonprofits struggle but, like author Maya Angelou so eloquently said, we must "try to be a rainbow in someone's cloud."

If we all promise to volunteer at our local food banks or spend some

time to help those in need, our efforts might spread to others, like water flowing through the veins of a leaf on a rose getting ready to bloom. With loving care and attention, the rose and those in need would thrive. Would you commit to volunteer your time in 2016?

My third prayer would be for the animals of the world that have suffered from neglect, abuse and abandonment. All need tenderness, love, attention, food and shelter.

Anatole France, a French novelist who won the 1921 Nobel Prize for literature, said it better than I ever could: "Until one has loved an animal, a part of one's soul remains unawakened."

As part of an animal rescue group, I know firsthand heart-wrenching stories and hear about tragedy often. But I don't give up. None of us committed to animal rescue or any other volunteer organization throw our hands up and surrender.

We know firsthand that the willingness to unselfishly help others strengthens the glow in our souls.

So, those are my three prayers for 2016 and, as the Big Apple ball drops in Times Square at midnight on Dec. 31, and the lights flash, confetti flies, "Auld Lang Syne" begins, and the world welcomes a new year, please pray along with me that 2016 that will be remembered as a year filled with compassion, love, brotherhood, sisterhood, and fondness for one another rather than one filled with fear.

Contact Peg DeMarco at pegdemarco@earthlink.net.