

Conversation with the Mayor - December 21, 2009
Vicky Daly

The Gift of the New Year

Have you ever stopped to think how much time we put in preparing for Christmas? The advertisers would have us start immediately after Labor Day, before we have even put away the lawn furniture and closed the pool. Some, perhaps the wiser among us, purchase the 'just right' gift whenever they see it, any time, any place. In many churches, the preparation time begins four Sundays before Christmas. This year it was November 29, just three days after Thanksgiving. And the prep time is busy, filled with buying, baking, choir rehearsals, bell ringing, and, we hope, some thoughtful time as to what Christmas is all about.

Coming right on the heels of Christmas is, of course, New Year's Day, just one week later. Parties, football, resolutions made and rarely kept. One seldom thinks of gifts in relation to the New Year, but I invite you to do so this year. New Year's Day 2010 presents us with an unparalleled gift – 365 brand new days to use to do good things. I know; I know; we have families, jobs, obligations and those have to come first. Indeed, so think in terms of the number of new hours you will have at your disposal – 8,760; or new minutes – 525,600. Surely, we can all spare some minutes to help, volunteer, pay a compliment. Many, many smiles could be shared in the new 31,536,000 seconds that roll out before us in 2010. Deduct the recommended 8 hours of sleep each night, 2,960 hours total, and you still have ample time for kindnesses, which, conveniently, can be performed at home, at work, while exercising, shopping, dog walking, driving, shoveling snow. What is remarkable is that kindness shown always comes back, sometimes from a different direction, but it comes back. It is also a wonderful example to set for the younger generation. So, let's use our new year wisely and well and, best of all, we can start right now, as soon as you finish reading this. Happy New Year!