

2025, A New Year!

May We Achieve Wisdom & Hope!

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All peoples, religions, and cultures celebrate, with hope, the start of a new year. ***It is an auspicious time*** to evaluate and start again. It is a time to take account of the great challenges and uncertainties that we, and all humanity, face. It is a time to make new and better resolutions, renew intentions, and share good wishes.

As this new year 2025 begins, I want to wish everyone, within these lines, WISDOM and HOPE, or even better, wisdom so that we have hope.

For human beings, wisdom has always been the most desired and sought-after virtue: “*More precious than corals, and no treasure of yours can compare with it.*” (Prov 3:15). Cultures, philosophies, and theologies prioritize this virtue above all others, equating it with wisdom and prudence, integrating it within the fundamentals of human existence and in our daily task of living and living together, in order to find the truth in the laws of nature, but - especially - in the deepest and most certain desires and tendencies of the human being, always in the pursuit of happiness.

The wise man is a lamp that guides our collective steps forward toward the truth to build better human beings, healthy and fraternal relationships, and a better world. Meanwhile, “*if a blind person leads a blind person, both will fall into a pit*” (Mt 15:14). This wisdom contrasts with foolishness and clumsiness. A wise man and wise human communities build their lives and destiny on rock, while clumsy and foolish human beings and communities build - or rather, destroy - their present and their future on sand (cf. Mt 7:26).

Today’s postmodern, “light” culture – for reasons too extensive to explain in this brief article – has been leading us along paths that veer away from wisdom and truth. We are traveling, living, sharing, and relating to half-truths that – for this reason – are lies. This has led to meaningless lives, empty, emptied, and directionless existences. We have prioritized cunning and the ability to lie over truth and honesty. We have chosen corruption, profit, pleasure, waste, and the power that crushes over the wisdom and dignity of the human being.

The ability to deceive and the capacity for falsehood, evil, and personal and social harm are gaining ground. But we must point out that truth and falsehood are opposing terms, opposite and contradictory realities. ***The truth sets us free***; lies, dishonesty, and corruption – conversely – lead us toward slavery, the cliff, the human and social abyss. Corruption bleeds and destroys institutions, generates injustice, inequality, violence, and death, and causes the failure of individuals and peoples.

I speak of prudence and wisdom because our current reality, national and global, is in crisis, plagued by conflicts and evil, riddled with clamors and pains, and ***needing truth, authority,***

and wise, honest men and women with consistency between their deeds and words, and, especially, we urgently need wise rulers, leaders, and civil and religious guides.

At the beginning of this new year, 2025, we find ourselves in a world exhausted by wars and injustices, today's politicians and opportunists, and corruption in government agencies; in a society that appears adrift, lacking leaders committed to the common good and, yes, eagerly pursuing self-interest, whims, and personal and selfish achievements. We find ourselves confronted with a world map in which autocracies and dictators are emerging and in which human rights are being set aside or definitively trampled on and annihilated. **We need wisdom to build a world with space and opportunity for hope to be possible, to be able to live with hope.**

Hope is the engine of human existence. It is the expectation of the hope for better days that drives us every day to live and fight. No one can live without reason to hope. No one can live without hope.

A few days ago, we celebrated Christmas as the coming of the Light in the midst of darkness, *"a light arising on those dwelling in a land overshadowed by death"* (Mt 4:16). We all need a new and better year, a new and different year. We need **a year in which, faced with the threats and shadows of death and the culture of death, wisdom triumphs for hope, life triumphs over death**, over any form of death.

Pope Francis, with the proclamation of a jubilee year, also invites us to celebrate 2025 as a year of hope. Hope that – through wisdom – will be possible if we resume the journey, if our relationships, our civic coexistence, and our social structures are founded on social friendship, which springs from compassionate and supportive love among human beings. If we all begin to live "the best politics" every day, thinking and acting in pursuit of the collective good instead of seeking sectarian, partisan, self-serving, dishonest, and petty interests. (Cf. Pope Francis – *Encyclical Letter Fratelli Tutti*).

Politics cannot be limited to the dirty and deceptive game of advertising, to the dance of millions, to insults and disqualifications, or to the regurgitation of promises that are never fulfilled. Within our nation and in the United States leadership worldwide – political work, partisan politics, those who elect and those who are elected to govern must work to benefit the best and noblest human causes: seeking the benefit of peace as an abundance of justice and abundant life for all, especially for the weakest and most discarded in society.

Happy New Year! Happy 2025 to all! May it be a happy new year with wisdom that makes hope thrive!

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