

FR. BRAD HAGELIN

PASTOR

My dear Kirkland Catholics and guests,

Merry Christmas to you all! When I think Christmas, my nostalgia kicks in as I remember traveling to Pilchuck Secret Valley to identify and cut our Christmas tree and then sipping (*way too*) *hot* cider as we watched the tree-bailers work; or Frederick & Nelson “Santa Breakfasts” downtown; or heading up to Olympic Manor in Ballard to drive through and see the amazing Christmas lights; or driving over to Spokane to do Christmas with my mom’s parents (and often extended family). I remember going to Christmas Eve Mass and thinking “I cannot wait until this is over so we can get back and hang stockings.”

Nostalgia in relation to childhood may not be a bad thing; but if I’m honest and reflect back on my childhood (or read my journals) I remember how often bored and restless I was. Nostalgia is a selective memory that may trick us into thinking there really were “good old days” and can keep us from living in the present. I am far less bored and restless now that I am an adult, and also I *usually* do not now think “I cannot wait until Mass is over!” In relation to Christmas, the memories of sneaking into the living room to check out the presents under the tree in the early morning brings that nostalgic feeling and a smile to my face, but the memory doesn’t give me joy or peace by itself.

Long preamble to a point that might seem trite but is of real significance. Only Jesus gives true peace and joy. We only receive peace and joy by living in the present. And Jesus conveys that to us in *this* life, not just the life to come. If you have felt bored (or medicate your boredom with your phone, etc.) or restless, or fearful take courage and know that Jesus is calling you deeper. If you’ve been irregular in the practice of the Faith, I (actually Jesus) invite(s) you back. It is not an immediate fix to all restlessness and anxiety at once, but over time one will notice a tangible sense of deeper peace and grounded-ness in life. May this New Calendar Year upcoming be one of good resolutions, peace, joy and blessings to you and yours.

With love in Christ,

Fr. Brad