

New Years

2026

As we begin a new year, many of us feel a mix of hope and hesitation. We make plans, set goals, and quietly wonder what this year will bring. Joy or struggle? Growth or loss? We stand at the doorway of the unknown, carrying both excitement and uncertainty into the year ahead. From the animated film “Up”, there comes a sweet and light-hearted moment — it is a story about an elderly man and an overly enthusiastic young boy, two of the most unlikely companions you could imagine. Life places them together in a way neither of them planned, and what follows is ... charming, funny, and surprisingly deep. It reminds us that some of the most meaningful journeys begin not with careful planning, but with unexpected invitations.

Early in the film, we hear from the young boy, a simple line that captures THAT spirit perfectly: “Adventure is out there.” It speaks to the excitement of setting out, even when we don’t yet know where the journey will lead. For us as Catholics, that line carries a deeper truth. Following God is always an adventure — not always easy, not always comfortable, but always meaningful. Faith is never about staying exactly where we are and playing it safe. Faith is about trusting God enough to step forward into His unexpected invitations.

Today, the Church places before us the solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God. No one understood this idea of unexpected invitations better than she did. When the angel came to Mary, she was not handed a detailed roadmap. She was not promised comfort or certainty. She was invited into something completely unknown. And yet, she said YES. With that yes, Mary began the greatest adventure in human history: God entering the world ... Through her trust, eternity stepped into time. Through her faith, salvation took on flesh. Mary did not know every challenge that awaited her the journey to Bethlehem, the flight into Egypt, Simeon’s warning that a sword would pierce her heart — but she trusted that God was at work.

That is the invitation of this New Year. We do not know what the year will hold. Some plans may fall apart. Some paths may surprise us. But the question before us is not whether the year will be easy. The question is whether we will trust God enough to follow Him into His unexpected invitations. Holiness is not about our perfect planning. It is about courageous trust.

On this Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God, we ask for her intercession. May she teach us how to say yes again — yes to God’s will, yes to grace, yes to the adventure of faith. Yes to unexpected invitations. As we step into this New Year, may we do so with hope, trusting that with God, adventure truly is out there — and it always leads us closer to Him.