Dear Friends of Mount Saviour,

Every new beginning is a celebration and a festival—not merely a cause or excuse for one. Then it soon becomes more excuse than celebration. The new beginning expressing itself is celebration and festival.

Christmas is such a festival and a celebration for us because it gives our life an entirely new beginning. The Incarnation of God in the person of Jesus, the Christ, embodies a new beginning not only for God and man, but also for man and his neighbor, and for man and the cosmos. Christmas celebrates the context for an entirely new life—the life of God in an individual man, the new Adam, father and brother of us all. Everything is new again as it was in the beginning when there was light and that light was the life of the world.
Now, there is a new way of making the Christmas festival a warm and comfortable memorial of the cultural consequences of our historic origins. But the consequences of the Incarnation are cosmic and not merely cultural. Furthermore, the Incarnation of God in Jesus is an event unique in the annals of both God and man. And therefore we are Christians only if we allow it to have its unique consequences in our lives. Otherwise, we have not Christians but Christianity, an ideal, which grows old and may become more excuse for living than being life itself.

There is something old about Christmas and about Christians which like old wine makes them better with age. That is the old attitude of becoming quiet and still like the holy night, in order to receive the Word of God. It is to listen. It is to welcome again the life-giving word into the depths of our being. For we live and move and have our being in God's great depth. Thanks be to him who renewed our youth like the eagle's and who then gives joy to that youth.

We would like to share with you the 'new beginnings' this season always brings. We found a word of Reverend Father Damasus in one of his old conferences, and several members of the community have added words of their own.

Father Gregory celebrated the 40th anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood in 1973. He has taken up again the arduous duties of Prior. But those who have seen him at the Monastery of Christ-in-the-Desert agree he has never looked younger. Father Placid, our other surviving founding father, has never looked old—and he still doesn't. But it has been 40 years since he first made profession in monastic life at Fort Augustus in Scotland. The lives of service and commitment of these two monks, one in the desert, and the other in our vineyard, are celebrations each in their own way of what the Incarnation is and does. If life begins at 40, we rejoice in their new beginnings.

It was also a new beginning for Abbot Rembert Weakland who was re-elected Abbot Primate on the first ballot at the Benedictine congress in Rome last Fall. For us at Mount Saviour it was an especially glad celebration that he accepted this word of trust from God and his brothers. He takes up again the hopes and joys of Benedictines for the Church and the World.

The Congress of the Benedictine Confederation was a rather happy event in its own right. In spite of all the problems and sorrows there is a new evidence of faith and joy that the Messiah is among us, in the midst of his imperfect people, forming and recreating us in his Body. It is somehow expressive of the Incarnation that the theme for the next Congress is Finding God in One's Neighbor.

Another new beginning and a beginning association with the lives of our brothers at Weston will sit with our brothers at Weston and with the beginning association with the way of joining together more.

We intend to take seriously the call to One's Neighbor, and the Jubilee Year was in the Jubilee Year 1950 that we recognize this call for a new beginning and set something of a sign. We are part of this phenomenon, but it also involves the wise men, a sign to begin an inward journey in us as our hope of glory. And so the journey because God has become one.

We ask you to join us and support us by the example of your prayers and your friends may form one brother and the neighbors some dimension of that. Because it comes from the heart and we know so well, peace must be enforced as the gift which is himself. We are truly wise men, we know the direction is a star worth following. We know today and today, that there is and there will be same reception awaits the honor and also there is the same God offering to us joy being formed in the flesh as he was and joyous news. Let us make it a new birth.

Reverend Father Damasus Speaks About Christmas.

Winter invites us to turn the spirit, to listen to the Word throne at this time of year. We look forward to a new year, so is "Now I begin" a phrase full of light.

Our Heavenly Father has been at work for the new year. It is full of beginnings: the beginning of a new month, the beginning of a new day, the beginning of a new life. The power of new beginnings! This Advent begins the Church's new year of "O my Lord." Wonderful words for
Consider the New Beginning as He appears to Our Lady, to the shepherds, the Magi. The Church carries the One Who said: "I, the Beginning, speak to you." She carries the Word of God in her womb; He constantly works new beginnings by the power of the love of the Father. "Deus caritas est." He is this charity and wishes to share it with us. That is why we can always celebrate a new beginning.

Think--a human being thrown back on his own resources may begin again, but it is new effort only as long as it remains captive to fallen nature. As goethe said, like the grasshopper it may jump up but after a while it is down in the grass singing the same song.

But if the sinner bathes in the spirit of compunction in the heavenly Father's love, this is really a new beginning. The burden of guilt may have made him old, but the love of the Father is so immediate that at the first turning of the heart there is a new beginning, before guilt is weighed or the sources of depression analysed. No matter what the depth, God's love is there the first moment it is invoked.
A New Day

Joyful Christmas

F. W. Wessel