New year, new frontier

After Mass this morning, Collin said, “Mom, I’m really scared of 2017. 2016 was such a good year and I’m not ready to see it end.”

I stopped and thought about what he said. In many ways he was right. 2016 was a great year. God blessed us with Teagan. We managed to stay afloat financially so that we had a roof over our heads and food in our bellies. We love being a part of St. Joan of Arc. And, thanks be to God, everyone we love is in good health.

I began to consider what 2017 might be like. We could suddenly lose everything if an unexpected event drained our finances. We might lose our house, go hungry and struggle to pay school tuition and other bills. There’s also the uncertainty of what a new president might bring our country. Someone I love could become very sick or die. That is my worst nightmare.

I didn’t know what to tell Collin because all of the sudden I was a little bit afraid of a new year. We group our life’s experiences into 12 months, 365 days and label them “good” or “bad” years based on the frequency or positive or negative events. But, sometimes we need to look at each year as a kaleidoscope of events rather than a polarized passing of time. On December 31st, we should look back at everything that’s happened since January 1st and think about the ways we’ve changed and how we got there.

“We don’t know what’s going to happen in 2017, but we do know that God will take care of us, no matter what happens,” I said. We talked about what things we have to look forward to, like his First Communion, our summer vacation, and adventures beyond our imagination. Life will be far from perfect, even in a “good” year, but as long as we remain faithful, God will protect us — here or in the great beyond.