

Christmas Greetings and an Update

Despite some health setbacks and the deaths of several dear colleagues and friends, 2025 has been a good year. I have lots of gratitude and no regrets.

My cancer, now in its 14th year, has made an unwelcome reappearance. I had chemotherapy in the spring and am now undergoing treatments again. The good news is that the treatments are intended to knock back the cancer, with the intent that I die *with* cancer rather than *from* cancer. I've just completed the 3rd treatment in this cycle and it's miserable but tolerable. I am still able to continue most of my normal work and do some physical exercise daily. The chemo treatments will go on for the next six months, but I hope to teach and carry a normal academic load during this time.

I continue to be a full-time faculty member here. I teach one graduate course each semester and work with doctoral students, directing their theses. This is very interesting and rewarding work. I have taught in classrooms for 50 years and it's nice to finally be able to do this type of mentoring for young scholars. I continue to give conferences, workshops, and retreats around the USA and Canada, but will be much curtailed for the next 6 months while I undergo cancer treatments.

In October, Penguin Random House released my book, *Insane for the Light*. The book completes a project I started 25 years ago, i.e., to write three books: *The Holy Longing* – on how to get your life together; *Sacred Fire* – on how to give your life away; and *Insane for the Light* – on how to give your death away. It was a relief to finish this project, but also a huge satisfaction. I have continued to write my weekly column, now in its 43rd year.

I turned 78 this year and am grateful for life, health, friends, and work. What's left to be said? Two words: *Thank You!* Thank you, God, for a year of life and grace, and a huge thank you to all of you who have supported me.

What Christmas message do I have? From John Shea's Christmas card from this year: *In the Christmas world where the Word brings life and light – we hold invisible hands.*

Prayers for a blessed Christmas.

Ron Rolheiser