REQUIEM FOR 2020

This was the year...

Heroes
Whom critics said became
Zeros
When we saw
COVID-19 spreading amongst
migrant workers
Healthcare workers having to
deal with
Stigma and isolation
Overwhelming
Partnerships in the

community

This was the year...

Missed opportunities
No more
Travel overseas
Large gatherings with
friends and family
Musical concerts
Singing Karoake
Looking forward to
Two injections of a vaccine
The hope conveyed

This was the year...



Now read the above again, in reverse, from the bottom to the top.

As this year draws to a close, it is an opportune moment for each of us to think about what 2020 has meant to us. This has been a year of great disruption, of confusion and chaos, and a time when we rued the loss of many freedoms we had taken for granted. Some of us may have felt that our contributions and sacrifices were unnoticed. Fatique was a constant companion as we worked long and hard.

There is however a lot to be thankful for. I am grateful for the friendships I have gained, working with many of you. I stepped into a new role as DMS early this year, unsure if I was fully competent for the work ahead of me. COVID-19 brought great uncertainty for me as I dealt with each challenge that came my way. I learnt to cherish words of support from many of you, to listen humbly to your advice when I was out of my comfort zone. Above all, I learnt to appreciate what it means for us to come together as one Public Health Family, united in mission and mandate. We are stronger together and more than the sum of our individual parts. I have learnt how changing our perspective can make a transformational difference on all that we do.

At their annual Thanksgiving service this year, the staff of the Loyola University were invited to reflect and share something for which they were grateful for. Their sharing was used to form the word cloud attached. I hope the words within mean something to you and will be things that you can truly be grateful for, in the new year.

May each of you have good health, happiness, peace of mind and fulfilment in 2021.

With best wishes, A/Prof Kenneth Mak Director of Medical Services Ministry of Health

