



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
428 60th Street, West New York, New Jersey 07093

LOVE THY NEIGHBOR

THE TOWN OF WEST NEW YORK CELEBRATES SAINT VALENTINE'S DAY

“Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.”
— King James Bible, Mark 12:31

Valentine's Day has become overrun by boxes of chocolate, gifts of jewelry and stuffed animals, and the expectation to prove one's love with money and purchases. While the traditions established on this day are perfectly understandable and have become a good-natured part of American culture, I think we would benefit as a nation to concentrate more on the love.

I'm not speaking only of romantic love, although the respectful bond between two people should most certainly be celebrated on that day, as well as on every other day of the year.

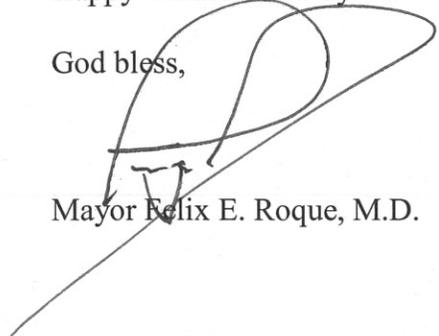
I'm speaking of the importance of love and respect between human beings on a daily basis – and more specifically, as quoted in Mark 12:31, the love of our neighbors who make up the great community we live in.

We face many hardships in this day and age: jobs are scarce, rents are high, cost of living continues to increase as salaries try and fail to keep up. The weather has been unkind, and we are tired. It's easy to isolate, easy to withdraw, easy to become angry or try to blame each other.

But perhaps, at least on this day, we can translate the courtly love that St. Valentine was commemorated for into a neighborly love and weather the storms together with love of self and love of neighbor, love of friends and love of strangers, love of community and love, of course, of our great country.

Happy Valentine's Day.

God bless,



Mayor Felix E. Roque, M.D.

Lead by Example