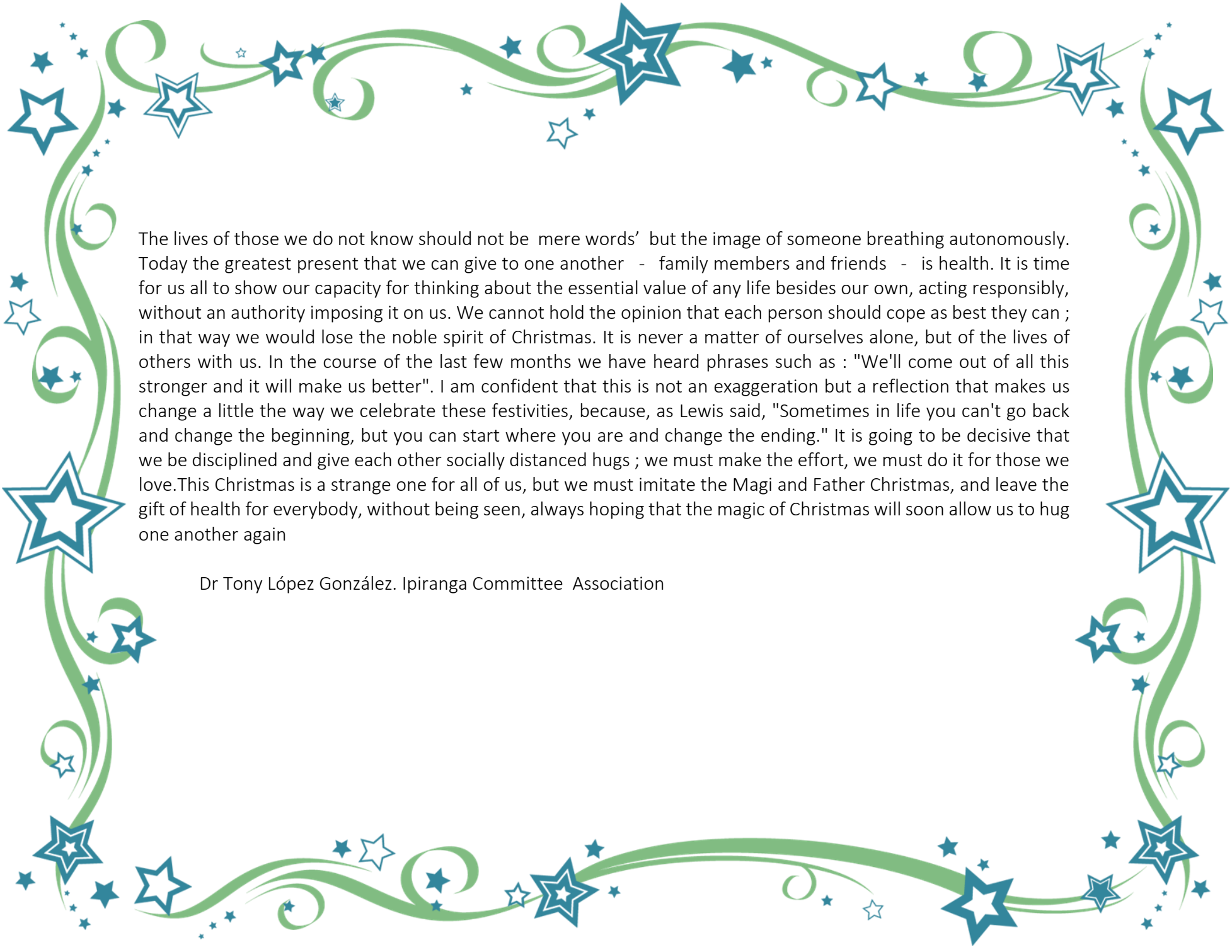


Christmas time, a time of hope for all.

Christmas is approaching, and on the part of everyone there is some concern to avoid situations that could cause an increase in new cases of Covid-19 once this short period has passed. Many people are thinking of having a diagnostic test before attending family dinners ; but those of us who work in the health services must give warning that there exists a window for the virus, that is to say, the time that elapses between a person becoming infected with a disease and the tests that detect the infection.

Everything is very fragile, too fragile and too volatile, and the global crisis caused by this pandemic has proved Darwin right in that it has been especially virulent amongst the weakest, especially the elderly and people with already existing health problems, and this, according to the team of researchers at McGill University, is probably due, among other reasons, to an alteration of the cellular oxidation process, which worsens as people grow older and when previous pathologies exist. Hence the reason for caring for all those most vulnerable people in a different way from that which we used to adopt around this time.

We all know that Christmas is a religious holiday, and it is not limited to just one day. It corresponds to a whole period until the Epiphany. But perhaps the meaning that has made these holidays universal, regardless of the beliefs of each of us, is that they correspond to certain human values that during the year seem to fall into oblivion, values such as the solidarity that we must practise, perhaps giving up the possibility of being with those we love the most, and avoiding the virus window. Today we are much closer to a cure than at the beginning, and this allows us to hope that we will be able to enjoy other celebrations with our families within a short period of time. Today observing physical distance can save lives, and, thanks to new technologies, that distancing does not mean that people are forgotten.



The lives of those we do not know should not be mere words' but the image of someone breathing autonomously. Today the greatest present that we can give to one another - family members and friends - is health. It is time for us all to show our capacity for thinking about the essential value of any life besides our own, acting responsibly, without an authority imposing it on us. We cannot hold the opinion that each person should cope as best they can ; in that way we would lose the noble spirit of Christmas. It is never a matter of ourselves alone, but of the lives of others with us. In the course of the last few months we have heard phrases such as : "We'll come out of all this stronger and it will make us better". I am confident that this is not an exaggeration but a reflection that makes us change a little the way we celebrate these festivities, because, as Lewis said, "Sometimes in life you can't go back and change the beginning, but you can start where you are and change the ending." It is going to be decisive that we be disciplined and give each other socially distanced hugs ; we must make the effort, we must do it for those we love. This Christmas is a strange one for all of us, but we must imitate the Magi and Father Christmas, and leave the gift of health for everybody, without being seen, always hoping that the magic of Christmas will soon allow us to hug one another again

Dr Tony López González. Ipiranga Committee Association



HEALTH FOR ALL

ALL OF US WHO FORM THE IPIRANGA COMMITTEE ASSOCIATION WISH YOU THE
BEST FOR THIS CHRISTMAS TIME AND FOR EVERY DAY IN 2021