



NEA NEWSLETTER



January 2024



THE YEAR by Ella Wheeler Wilcox

American poet Ella Wheeler Wilcox's meditation on the new year sums up the opportunities and burdens of the coming 12 months.

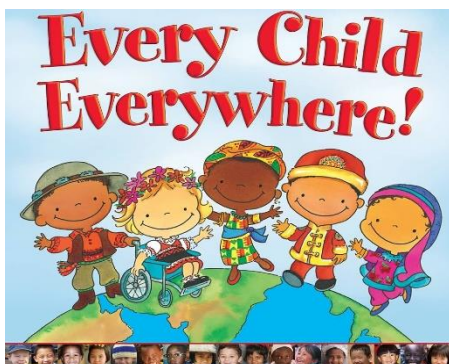
What can be said in New Year rhymes,
That's not been said a thousand times?
The new years come, the old years go,
We know we dream; we dream we know.

We rise up laughing with the light,
We lie down weeping with the night.
We hug the world until it stings,
We curse it then and sigh for wings.
We live, we love, we woo, we wed,
We wreath out prides, we sheet our dead.
We laugh, we weep, we hope, we fear,
And that's the burden of a year.



MAY THE NEW YEAR by Susan Williams

May the new year
be kind to you and yours
and to men and women everywhere
no matter where they live
and what language they speak.



May the new year
be kind to children everywhere
and may they enjoy good health
and abundant food and warm shelter
and be surrounded by love
no matter where they live
and what language they speak

May the new year
 be kind to all animals
 great and small
 for God created them
 and gave them into our care
 to be surrounded by love
 no matter where they live
 and what language they speak



May the new year
 be kind to our planet Earth
 for God created it to be our home
 full of bounty full of beauty
 and He gave it into our care
 to be surrounded by love
 no matter where we live
 and what language we speak

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 18 – 25 January

In this Week of Prayer for Christian Unity the Church is being challenged to stop and tend to the wounded and, in so doing, to recognise our own wounds as churches and as communities. Facing the reality of our own brokenness helps to connect us to the suffering of others from a place of humility and deep empathy, creating a sacred space of encounter inspired by Christ's healing love.



The message of Pope Francis is clear. We can use scientific progress to build a path to peace, by promoting human dignity and fighting disadvantage. Or we can let it to be used by the strong to make their position more solid, whatever the cost to others. The task of Christ's followers is to be on the side of those who suffer because they do not have power and influence. That means asking uncomfortable questions about morality and who has power.

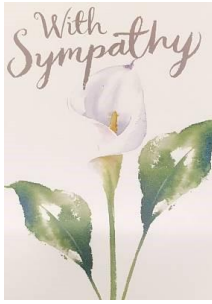
25 January Anniversary of the death of Father Jean Gailhac in 1890 aged 87

"We will use all the health and all the life that God has given us for his glory and his work."

Venerable Father Gailhac 



BEREAVEMENTS



We offer our sincere sympathy to -

The **EAA** on the death of **Sister Anne Marie Hill RSHM** who died on 3 January 2024 in New York. Anne Marie was 85 years old and in the 67th yr of her Religious Profession.



The **Portuguese Area** on the death of **Sister Maria da Silva Capela RSHM** who died on 13 January 2024. Sister Maria was 87 years old and in the 67th year of her profession. She was a member of the Braga community.

Seafield and Arrowsmith communities on the death of **Sister Joyce Attwood RSHM** on 19 January 2024. Joyce was aged 91 years and in the 73rd year of her Religious Profession.

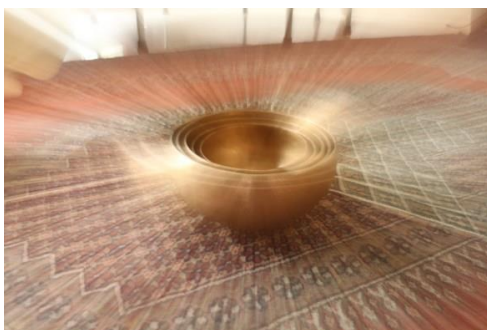
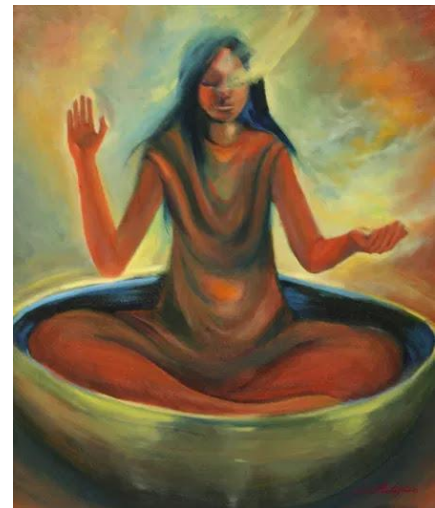
May these Sisters and all who have died recently rest in peace.

Singing Bowl by Malcolm Guite

Begin the song exactly where you are,
Remain within the world of which you're made.
Call nothing common in the earth or air,

Accept it all and let it be for good.
Start with the very breath you breathe in now,
This moment's pulse, this rhythm in your blood

And listen to it, ringing soft and low.
Stay with the music, words will come in time.
Slow down your breathing. Keep it deep and slow.



Become an open singing-bowl, whose chime
Is richness rising out of emptiness,
And timelessness resounding into time.

And when the heart is full of quietness
Begin the song exactly where you are.

TWO WISDOM STORIES

My Heart has been there All My Life

Once upon a time in the rainiest part of the rainy season, an old monastic began her pilgrimage to the holiest shrine on the holiest mountain in the land. Forced back by fierce winds and driving rain, she stopped at the foot of the incline to check directions one last time.

“Old woman,” the inn master scoffed, “this mountain is deep in wet and running clay. You cannot possibly climb this mountain now.”

“Oh, sir,” the old monastic said, “the climb to this shrine will be no problem whatsoever. You see, my heart has been there all my life. Now it is simply a matter of taking my body there, as well.”

Told by Sr Joan Chittister in keynote address Assembly of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious



THE GIFT OF A CUP FULL OF DIRT

For her fourth birthday, Rachel’s grandfather brought her a little paper cup full of dirt. She was disappointed with the gift and let him know that. In response, he simply smiled and then turned to pick up a small teapot from her doll’s tea set. He took her to the kitchen and filled it up with water. They went back into the nursery. He set the cup on the windowsill and gave Rachel the teapot. He then said, “*If you promise to put some water in the cup every day, something may happen.*”



Rachel did as she was told, but as the days passed, she found it harder and harder to keep up the task. At one point, she tried to give the cup back to her grandfather, but he simply told her she had to keep it up everyday.



With much effort, she did just that, and eventually she woke up one morning and there she saw two small green leaves sprouting out of the soil. She was amazed by what she saw, and everyday she watched the plant grow bigger and bigger.

When she saw her grandfather again, she told him all about it thinking that he would be just as surprised. He wasn’t. The grandfather explained to her how life was everywhere and how it was hidden in the most ordinary and unlikely places.

Rachel was excited by this, and asked,

“And all it needs is water, Grandpa?”

Her grandfather touched her gently on top of her head, and said,

“No. All it needs is your faithfulness.”

Based on a story told by Rachel Naomi Remen

