

ENCOURAGEMENT ENCOURAGEMENT

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The Host Apostolate
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Travelling and 'Resolutions'...

We are all travellers.. We travel to work, entertainment, Church, schools shopping visiting in fact anywhere, we have to leave one place and go to another. Much of our day is spent in travel. We are travelling into another year with its expectations of better things, joys and sadnesses. We are not alone for throughout history mankind has been moving, changing and travelling to somewhere. The people of Israel spent forty years travelling in the desert finding a resting place. Mary, Joseph and Jesus travelled to Egypt to avoid persecution by Herod... the Magi travelled to visit the Infant with so much potential. Today vast numbers of people move to avoid conflict and poverty. A new year is also a time of reflection, a kind of travel through our thoughts over the past year and what the New Year will bring. We may think of those who are no longer with us or away from us for a while. Our thought may take us to prayer and a resolve to put things right, to change things.

Travelling through life we experience many different situations, good and bad and many surprises. At each turn there may be the unexpected and we have to deal with each thing as it arises.

Whether travelling physically or through time it can be a way of praying. Some people use this time to pray, 'to say' the rosary, or simply talk to the Lord. Have you thought of just telling the Lord how things are going with all the frustrations that travelling can bring.

We also travel through the seasons of life. Each day we grow older. Each year bring us to the

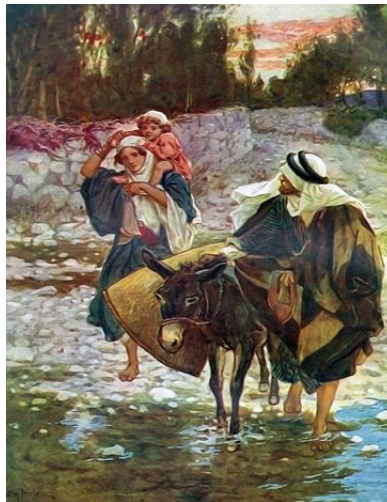
reality that bodily life will end but our spirits will endure and brings us closer to the Lord in whom we place our trust. We hope that whatever our age that the year will be kind to us and not leave us empty and unfulfilled and that our troubles will be small ones.

We often resolve to make things better for ourselves. This may mean changing things in our lives or stopping any action, activity or style of life.

New Year resolutions are part of the way we speak about any purposeful changes in our everyday activities. But have we ever looked at this as a means of a prayer, an attempt at wholeness or holiness. This is a perfect opportunity for doing this. The calendar New Year (for Advent is a start of a new season) fixed between Advent and Lent is a good time to think about changes that have to be made in our lives.

Interesting word *resolve* – to be determined, to desire to do something is its usual meaning but another way is to look at the word re-solve as if something that has happened and changed has to be re -sorted out, redone or attempted to be made sound and secure.' Sorted out, in other words.

So what about our resolutions? They may be very ordinary but important adjustments to our lives like eating less or drinking less,,. spending less or indeed being prudent with what we have in order to make ends meet. It may be in relationships with our family and friends, resolving disputes, trying to be patient, not losing our temper, helping more with ordinary daily chores. . They may be a decision to swear less, listening to others, visiting



"A person who does not travel is like a man who reads only one page of a book" St. Augustine of Hippo

someone alone, donating to charity on a regular basis. All these are things have merit and improve our lives and those of others.

But there are even deeper things that require our stronger resolutions. Do we live the Gospel to the best of our ability? Do we teach 'faith' to our children or grandchildren or become better informed ourselves. And what of prayer? Do we look at our relationship with Jesus? How often do we speak to our dearest and closest (or should be) friend? Do we pray for our daily needs, for forgiveness, for peace, and harmony? Do we pray for an end in conflict close to home or abroad? Our world is in turmoil, wars and rumours or wars abound. Refugees gather in their thousands and millions! Are we resolved to get involved in some local project to improve other people's lives and do something however small? A determination to pray at least once every day would change much in our lives.



POPE FRANCIS 1 GAVE ANOTHER SOLUTION TO THE WORLDS' ILLS' WHICH TOO COULD BE A NEW YEAR RESOLUTION. JUST BEFORE ADVENT HE ADMITTED HE WAS NOT A PHARMACIST BUT THAT HE DID NOT HESITATE BEING A SPOKESMAN FOR THE HEART-HEALTHY BENEFITS OF 59 LITTLE PILLS STRUNG TOGETHER: THE ROSARY. "I STRONGLY RECOMMEND SOME MEDICINE FOR ALL OF YOU" HE SAID, "ITS SPIRITUAL MEDICINE". HOLDING UP A WHITE BOX WITH AN ANATOMICAL DRAWING OF A HUMAN HEART ON IT, POPE FRANCIS TOLD 80,000 PEOPLE GATHERED FOR MIDDAY PRAYER THAT THE BOXES CONTAINED A ROSARY.

"DON'T FORGET TO TAKE IT" HE SAID "IT'S GOOD FOR YOUR HEART, FOR YOUR SOUL, FOR YOUR WHOLE LIFE.

HE WENT ON TO SAY THAT PRAYING THE ROSARY AND THE CHAPLET OF DIVINE MERCY WILL HELP PEOPLE REAP THE FRUITS OF THE YEAR OF FAITH BECAUSE THEY ARE A SPIRITUAL AID FOR THE SOUL, AND FOR SPREADING LOVE, FORGIVENESS AND BROTHERHOOD TO EVERYONE.

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THAT DAY 20,000 BOXES WERE DISTRIBUTED BY VOLUNTEERS, PRIEST AND PEOPLE ALIKE. SWISS GUARDS AND THE ALBERTINE SISTERS WHO WORK IN THE BARRACKS HAD SPENT WEEKS PREPARING THE BOXES AND GIVING INSTRUCTIONS IN ENGLISH, FRENCH, POLISH, AND ITALIAN. HE ALSO SAID THAT IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT AN ADDITIONAL BENEFIT CAN BE GOT FROM THE 'PRESCRIPTION' IF IT IS ACCOMPANIED BY THE SACRAMENTS WHICH CAN BE OBTAINED FROM ANY PRIEST!

NOVEMBER 2013

Now isn't that a good New Year resolution? The Rosary is a wonderful prayer for it draws us into the Life of Jesus and Mary and the Apostles. It is simple to do, even a decade a day, can be done when travelling, walking, on transport and can be prayed by anyone. So too is the Chaplet of Divine Mercy. Even the words '*have mercy on us and on the whole world*' make us focus on all people, a blessing. We encompass in this prayer all who suffer, who are hungry and deprived of either physical or spiritual well-being.

So as we gently travel into a new year we start again and with our hopes and fears. Jesus spent much time in going from one place to another proclaiming the Good News. He too sometimes felt weary and tired and needed rest and found it in prayer and alone in a time apart.

If you fail to keep your resolutions once, twice, many times, start again, dust yourselves down and continue. As the little boy wrote to God, 'I am doing the best I can... love Frank.' Jesus knows that.

Happy New Year to all with abundant blessings!

H.H.

Prayer Intentions That Christians of all diverse denominations may walk towards the unity desired by Christ Jesus.



January Feasts: 1st The Mother of God and World Peace Day, 5th/6th Epiphany, 18-25th Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, 21st St Agnes, 22nd St Vincent, 24th St Francis de Sales, 28th St Thomas Aquinas and 31st St John Bosco.