

Happy New Year!

New Year Reflection:

In his poem *New Reader* the poet Billy Collins muses over a salt and a pepper shaker standing next to each other on a mat:

"I wonder if they had been friends,

After all these years,

Or are they still strangers to each other?"

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THE OLD YEAR:

All that is left of the old year:

Memories!

Some like broken shards of pottery,

Others like spun gold!

THE NEW YEAR:

Still standing side by side,

To be?

Or not to be?

Spinning golden threads of love?

W.J.F.

Jan. 1, 2016 Feast of the Mother of God.

Brothers and sisters, when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman...

Gal.1:1

Today amidst the hurrahs of bowl games, we celebrate Mary's Day. Mary's team will take the field against Ohio State, and if they should prevail, at its ending they shall sing "Notre Dame, Our Mother!"

And on other fields of play when a last ditch, last second pass shall be completed, it will be hailed as a "Hail Mary!"

How fitting! For she is the Mother of Mercy ushering in this 2016 HOLY YEAR OF MERCY!

AND AS THE BEAUTIFUL PRAYER PROCLAIMS" "NEVER

□ WAS IT KNOWN THtAT ANYONE WHO SOUGHT YOUR PROTECTION WAS LEFT UNAIDED!"

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Sunday, Jan. 3: Epiphany

Rise up in splendor Jerusalem!

Your light has come!

Isaiah 1

When we were in college at Conception Abbey, we returned from Christmas vacation to a basilica competely illumined with flickering vigil lights.

Epiphanyi the great feast o the illumination shed by the glorious Christ Child.

Indeed in common English parlance, we describe the enlightenment of some new and glorious idea as an "Epiphany!"

And the Christ Child is an illumination of a grand and new revelation: that peace and love are ultimately more splendid than pessimism and hate!

Seen on a current bumper sticker:

"Love TRUMPS hate."

The Wise men followed the star.

So too is our journey.

Away from the darkness of hate, fear, and war:

always toward the light.

And so we pray:

O come all ye faithful,

joyful and triumphant!

We follow the star☐

out of the darkness of fear and hostility.

With the wise men from the East,

we come again to the crib.

Hope for better days dawns before us.

God bless 2016,

Amen☐