

Reflection Friday New Year's Day, Mary the Mother of God, 2021

Let Aaron's blessing for his people be our blessing as we begin a new year: *"May the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord let his face shine upon you and be gracious to you. May the Lord uncover his face to you and bring you peace."* Let us respond with the psalmist, *"Let the people praise you. Let all the people praise you!"* There is no better way to start a new year.

As we give thanks and praise to God, we give thanks to Mary, the Mother of God, the Mother of Jesus, for bringing Jesus to us and giving him to us as a light to guide us throughout the new year. With Mary by our side, we dedicate ourselves to God knowing that, like Jesus, we, too, are precious in the eyes of God. If we listen carefully, the bells are ringing joyously in heaven. If they are not ringing on earth, they are ringing in our hearts. Ringing out songs of peace and joy and love and exultation and praise; ding, dong, dinging, gloriously on high! We take only the blessing and joys of the past year into the new year. Everything else can be left behind. We will need all our attention to be alert to God's presence and respond with generosity and love.

Ring Out, Wild Bells (Alfred Lord Tennyson)

Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,
the flying cloud, the frosty light:
the year is dying in the night;
ring out, wild bells, and let him die.
Ring out the old, ring in the new,
ring, happy bells, across the snow:
the year is going, let him go;
ring out the false, ring in the true.
Ring out the grief that saps the mind
for those that here we see no more;
ring out the feud of rich and poor,
ring in redress to all mankind.
Ring out a slowly dying cause,
and ancient forms of party strife;
ring in the nobler modes of life,
with sweeter manners, purer laws.
Ring out the want, the care, the sin,
the faithless coldness of the times;
ring out, ring out my mournful rhymes
but ring the fuller minstrel in.
Ring out false pride in place and blood,
the civic slander and the spite;
ring in the love of truth and right,
ring in the common love of good.
Ring out old shapes of foul disease;
ring out the narrowing lust of gold;
ring out the thousand wars of old,
ring in the thousand years of peace.
Ring in the valiant man and free,
the larger heart, the kindlier hand;
ring out the darkness of the land,
ring in the Christ that is to be.

Wishing you all the very best of blessings, happiness, joy and peace for the New Year today and every day - from us all. (Assumptionists)