

A New Year Message to the Community of Aidan & Hilda and the Wider World

The Year of God's Crackpots

In 2009 Susan Boyle, unknown under-achiever, became Susan Boyle, world-wide icon thanks to Simon Cowell's Britain's Got Talent and U-Tube. In USA she chimed in with the rags to riches American dream. Throughout the world, at a time of down-turn and dashed hopes, she gave hope that those who had been passed over might still rise up. Susan Boyle means that there is no age limit on fulfilling your dream. In her we see the blooming of a woman who had never been a high achiever and never been asked to marry. People fired by the vision of Hilda of Whitby, who unlocked the song in Caedmon, the first, ill-educated English pop singer, seek to unlock the song in every human life. Let that be our task in 2010.

In 2009 Richard Dawkins spread his ill-conceived 'Science Proves Atheism' campaign across the world. However, the latest scientific findings made his claims much more difficult to substantiate. The Genome Project revealed, to the surprise of many, that human genes are overwhelmingly similar to those of apes, and 30% the same as those of a banana. So random selection producing gene variations does not explain why humans enjoy beauty, create art, discern and choose between right and wrong. Mechanistic theory cannot account for these, or for free will or for Being. A materialistic theory of evolution might account for acts of enlightened self-interest, but cannot account for acts of unconditional, sacrificial love. At our Annual Gathering I met James Le Fanu, a Daily Telegraph writer. Over Christmas my sister Sally and I devoured his book *Why Us?*, which details how many new scientific advances point beyond the mechanistic laws to a parallel law of Mind which is not the product of material creation, but with which our brains and bodies may connect. Our task in 2010 is to develop a communal mind that recognizes Being, it is to out-think and out-love the materialists.

In 2009 the continuing financial crisis led many to face up to the fact that our civilization is skin deep and could come crashing down. The planetary threats that the Copenhagen summit was called to address, and its inadequate response, lead some to despair and others to participate in a grass-roots revolution of simple life-style, and the building up of more sustainable local communities. In 2010 our Way of Life, which commits us to simplicity and earth-care, must move from being the option of a few to the choice of many.

In 2009 a prophet said to me 'Attend to the DNA of The Community of Aidan and Hilda'. The publication of *Waymarks for the Journey* does just that according to one of its first readers, and is a means by which the above aim may be achieved. Its year's daily readings ends with this prayer, which perhaps we can make our own as we journey into 2010:

Great Spirit,
Encouraged by your cloud of witnesses,
Help us to take your word deep into our souls
Live it out, bravely, freely, creatively:
To be cheerful when we want to complain
To be patient when we want to flare up
To push on when we want to stand still
To keep silent when we want to prattle
And to love when we want to harden our hearts.

In 2009 I and others experienced the limitations which make up the fragments of our lives. 'The hope I have', said one, referring to the woman who anointed Jesus by breaking the vase in which was contained the oil, 'is the broken vase from which the oil of anointing comes'. This reminds me of the words of the apostle Paul that divine treasure comes through our faulty human frames, or as David Adam expressed it in a sermon: 'God uses crack-pots'. Increasing numbers of people now see that the ego-centred world is falling apart and has no future, and that Jesus' words 'the meek shall inherit the earth' may be literally true. So may 2010 be 'The Year of the Crackpots'.

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