

2nd January 2021

Resolutions

“Perhaps those, who, trembling most, maintain a dignity in their fate, are the bravest: resolution on reflection is real courage.”

Horace Walpole, Memoirs of the Reign of King George II

Resolution 1 – “Tell someone I love them”

I’m not a courageous person, but I am given to reflection, and I’ve had plenty time for *that* recently. So I’m encouraged to read Horace Walpole’s words again today. Even though, to be honest, I *do* tremble from time to time, I hope I’ve maintained my dignity and can, therefore, be numbered among the bravest. Especially when reflection leads to resolution ...

The beginning of a year is often a time for making resolutions. They might be the “Firm Resolve” about which Robert Burns wrote *To Dr Blacklock* to encourage his friend to be bolder in his amorous pursuits: “And let us mind, faint heart ne’er wan fair lady.” Or they could be the “great and mighty resolutions” Samuel Butler spoke of in *Hudibras* in the 17th century. Such resolutions may be life-changing, or they may not. But, if we give ourselves time to reflect, such reflection should always lead to resolution. And that’s the courageous part. So, to resolution Number 1 ...

Early in my time as a hospice chaplain I attended a conference on end-of-life care at which distinguished and eloquent specialists shared their insights into the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual aspects of caring for people who are dying. For a Q&A session at the end, the speakers were brought together as a panel. One of the questions was: “How would you suggest each of us could be more ready to face our own mortality?” Quick as a flash, one of the panellists responded, “Go home today and tell someone you love them.” Such a response to a searching question must have arisen from much reflection – in both professional and private life. But, twenty-five years later the strength of that response has stayed with me. I’ve not always been good at following it through. So I come back to it again and again, and, in reflection, try to do it better.

Today I resolve to tell someone I love them. And I hope it’s a resolution I can keep well into a new year and not just at the start!

A prayer for today

Loving God, let love me on my lips today as much as it is in my heart. Amen.

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