



## A revision of life

I remember bumping into a monk, we'll call Kevin, who was going through a challenging time and was headed to a confrontational meeting. He shared how, leaving his cell, he said a prayer, "God, please be with me." Immediately came the reply, "No Kevin, *you* be with *me*."

There is a world of difference between asking God to be part of our agenda, instead of surrendering to the Beloved.

We know from Scripture and experience, God often seems to favor the tougher route. Recall when the Israelites were leaving Egypt, God did not lead them by the shorter route, but rather the longer way through the desert of the Red Sea (Exodus 13:17-18).

Going with God is a risk, it means stepping into the unknown and yet we know from John's Gospel, the Beloved is the route and road, "I am the Way."

As we prepare to step into this New Year, only too ready to shake the dust of the "Camino Covid" from our feet, perhaps it would be important to pause and do "a revision of life" on 2020. Where did I grow, where did I stagnate? Where did I find healing, where was I hurt? What excited me, what paralyzed me? Where was the Beloved this past year?

It would be a pity to miss the gift and grace of 2020. Surrendering our expectations and plans, 'staying with the Beloved'

may well be the way to go this New Year.

Looking back, I remember being impressed by the sure step, straight back and squared shoulders of Kevin as he strode into the meeting. Let's step into the Camino of 2021 in the same way.

*Buen Camino and Happy New Year,*

*Michael*

## A Sleep of Prisoners

The human heart can go the lengths of God...

Dark and cold we may be, but this  
Is no winter now. The frozen misery  
Of centuries breaks, cracks, begins to move;  
The thunder is the thunder of the floes,  
The thaw, the flood, the upstart Spring.

Thank God our time is now when wrong  
Comes up to face us everywhere,  
Never to leave us till we take  
The longest stride of soul we ever took.

Affairs are now soul size.

The enterprise

Is exploration into God.

Where are you making for? It takes  
So many thousand years to wake,  
But will you wake for pity's sake!

Christopher Fry

## Michael news

Michael, respecting the stay-in-place guidelines, spent a quiet, contemplative Christmas in his hermitage in Santa Cruz, California. He remains in discernment as to the future of his ministry, due to the uncertainty of the present circumstances. We hope to have more clarity later in the year.

Meanwhile, Michael has not given up the possibility of walking at least a section of the Via Francigena (Canterbury to Rome), depending on the vaccine and global situation.

Michael is so appreciative of your thoughtful Christmas greetings and generous kindness. He has a candle burning for you, in thanksgiving, during the 12 days of Christmas.

## Retreat recordings make a good New Year's resolution for mindfulness

Peace of mind is hard to come by in these chaotic times. Michael's retreat recordings are the perfect mindful getaway, offering a calming respite. All 13 of Michael's retreats are available as downloads. Each is a full retreat, consisting of 5 talks, totaling over 5 hours. To view all the available retreats, visit:

<https://hermitfish.com/audio-retreats>

## Grateful thanks

Michael is grateful for everyone's prayers, good wishes and support. Donations to Hermit Fish, his 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization are fully tax deductible. Gifts of any size are greatly appreciated.  
FID: 82-2489475

Visit: <https://www.hermitfish.com/donate>

Creative and logistical support for Michael, his *Buen Camino* newsletter and HermitFish.com website are provided by Enigma | LA, [enigmala.com](http://enigmala.com)