

Tony Thinking Aloud lxxxix

The year moves on. Plough Sunday and Monday are behind us. Schools are back. Saint Hilary's Day (January 13 - as I write) is the beginning of the Legal Year or the coldest day of the year according to folklore. A new season is beginning. I have not seen snowdrops yet, but I am sure some readers will have them in their garden.

The sketches in Alison's (my late wife) Countryside Book for this month are ploughing, ice skating, catkins, and lambs - all the sign of things to come. Among the birds that can be heard in January include mistle thrush, blackbird, wren, robin, and chaffinch. Don't forget to count the birds you see in your garden, from your balcony or in your local park for one hour between the 28th and 30th January 2022 for the RSPB's Big Garden Birdwatch. I seem to have lots in my garden perhaps they are getting ready to be counted.

We look to the month and year ahead as we undertake different goals and needs. You may know:

We are pilgrims on a journey
and companions on the road;
We are here to help each other
walk the mile and bear the load.

The shortest day has passed, and whatever nastiness of weather we may look forward to before spring, at least we notice that the days are getting longer. As January brings us brand new days, reflect as it's evenings get longer – take time to appreciate and look after nature, take time to enjoy your favourite things, take time to share and support each other in life.