

Tony Thinking Aloud cxxxiv

January is here again. Do we look back or forward? Named after the Roman God Janus, the protector of gates and doorways! Depicted as having two faces one looking backward and the other forward. One of four months with 31 days.

Although country folk say that the worst of winter is yet to come, sometimes it is not so. We will see!

Christmas decorations may be put away, many houses like mine will still have cards about. Next to them are letters from friends. A nice way to keep in touch, but with so much to do at Christmas often not properly read. Some are cheerful and jolly, some less fortunate explaining why a name can no longer be seen on the card. I try to read the letters about now as I reflect on friends which have passed during the year ... May they rest in peace.

Life changes but January comes just the same. Take the Robin, he is more cautious when winter storms are near, he keeps to the hedge and bush but when the weather is good, he sings in the open.

The following birds may be heard in song this month, mistle thrush, thrush, blackbird, wren, robin, wood lark to name some.

We can look back over the countryside in recent months and hope to see more of them in 2023.

Perhaps like me you think of family happenings from the past, friends not seen for years. Who might we catch up with in 2023? I will have been ordained 60 years in June. I thought the other day about a friend of mine at college, he was never ordained. Went to his wedding but have not seen him since... we did do

unexpected things together; we went to Glyndebourne. I am sure I am not the only one who can reflect in the same way!!

Who knows who we might meet up with in the coming year? We think now of family and friends as we start out into in 2023 – and remember them, in our thoughts and prayers.