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Hope: Life to the full.

Chapters

1. What is hope. What it is not.
2. Types of hope.
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4. Problems with hope.
5. Sustaining and developing hope.
6. Luck and gambling.
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"Hope springs eternal in the human breast man never is but always to be blest" in Alexander Pope's 1732 poem, 'An essay on man'

"Yesterday is history. Tomorrow is a mystery. But today is a gift, and that is why it's called the present." composer of this truth is unknown.

"Success is not final, failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts." Said Winston Churchill (1874-1965)

Underpinning my life's strategy is "I will do my best across my PIES(*) and whatever will be will be - God's plan for me."

Introduction.

I will start with the sweeping statement that life without hope is grim.

To live is to hope. To hope is to live. If hope departs it leaves the door open for despair and its close - diabolical – collaborator, suicide, to enter.

Everything - from the trivial to the strategic - we do, has a hope ingrained - typically inarticulate.

With a cup of coffee in my hand, if - unlikely though it be - I was asked "what do you hope to achieve with the coffee?" I would reply, "I hope to slake my thirst, to enjoy the taste, to help me wake up and to reduce the risk of dementia.

When I prepare couples for marriage, I ask, "What do you hope to achieve through and in your marriage?" The answers vary - from inspirational to depressing.

(*) These are the Physical, Intellectual, Emotional and Spiritual dimensions of my life.

You, dear reader, might ask yourself as you set out on a new day, "What do I hope to achieve today?" On a Sunday, "what do I hope to achieve in this new week?"

"How about your whole life?"

Mine? "I hope to keep on helping God make this world a better place - more like The Blessed Trinity would like it to be - and thus end up in eternal Paradise with God."

Hope energises. We can do very little, but what we do may achieve a great deal. I used to hope that mine would make a difference. I am there as a small boy within the Starfish Story.

Once upon a time, there was an old man who used to go to the ocean to do his writing. He had a habit of walking on the beach every morning before he began his work. Early one morning, he was walking along the shore after a big storm had passed and found the vast beach littered with starfish as far as the eye could see, stretching in both directions.

Off in the distance, the old man noticed a small boy approaching. As the boy walked, he paused every so often and as he grew closer, the man could see that he was occasionally bending down to pick up an object and throw it into the sea. The boy came closer still and the man called out, "Good morning! May I ask what it is that you are doing?"

The young boy paused, looked up, and replied "Throwing starfish into the ocean. The tide has washed them up onto the beach and they can't return to the sea by themselves," the youth replied. "When the sun gets high, they will die, unless I throw them back into the water."

The old man replied, "But there must be tens of thousands of starfish on this beach. I'm afraid you won't really be able to make much of a difference."

The boy bent down, picked up yet another starfish and threw it as far as he could into the ocean. Then he turned, smiled and said, "It made a difference to that one!" (**)

Hope can be a noun: "I have a hope". I anticipate, assume, crave, desire, expect, wish, yearn,
Adjective, hopeful: confident, encouraging, optimistic person or statement.,
Adverb: expectantly, hopefully we shall arrive in time to be there at kick-off.
A verb. 'I hope you enjoy – and benefit from – reading this article.

If the world around us is like a chessboard, hope focuses on the white squares – even while knowing quite well what the black ones contain.

Hope focuses on events and optimistically imagines a benign future. The events that make up 'things' can be creative rather than destructive.

(**) Recently, I received an email from someone I have been helping financially for many years. It read, ". I can definitely be counted among the rescued star-fish! Without you I'd have been a star-fish skeleton long ago, breaking up on the beach. *Thank you x*"

Hope is all about imagining and reaching for a better future for ourselves. Hope is both an emotion and a way of thinking. We experience it in our brain but it comes from somewhere or someone outside ourselves. Hope is crucial in times of uncertainty, and in dealing with adversity.

Writing this book is a journey of multiple hopes. It is helping me discover what I fully mean by the word 'hope'; and I hope it will achieve the same aim for its - eventual - readership and thus help it on through their thus enriched lives.

Pilgrimages are palpable - often rather costly - expressions of hope, as through them/on them pilgrims hope to improve some - occasionally indeed all - of their PIES of life. At times - and for well over a decade organising pilgrimages to Lourdes - there is clear evidence of their successes, even if rarely miracles are claimed.

Everyone's journey, not just a pilgrimage, hopes to achieve something; maybe as well as arriving at the destination, to enjoy the journey – as I do when I travel by Eurostar to Paris and my sister Jarmila.

The whole of our life is a journey of hope; towards achievements in space-time and, eventually, to reach our goal: the one we call God.

Secular hope “is to cherish a desire with expectation of fulfilment.”

‘I hope for my friend's early recovery’. ‘I hope the horse I backed wins.’

In sacred art, anchor is the symbol of hope: “We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure.” (Heb 6,19)

The sunrise and a rainbow are traditional visual symbols of hope.

Across the world Rainbows are a symbol of hope in many cultures. For Christians – and Jews and Muslims - a rainbow promises better times to come. God sent one to Noah after the great flood to tell people they could go forth and multiply without fear of another flood.(Gen 9,13-16)

Rainbow represents hope because after a rain comes a rainbow. In life, we should always remember that storms in life does not last long. Rainbow represents hope to remind us that despite hardships, we should not give up because everything will be bound to clear up if you face it. Rainbows are universal symbols of hope, love, happiness, and acceptance. When you see a rainbow, it may seem to be a message of hope from a deceased loved one or guardian angel. Noticing a rainbow could signify that you're on a spiritual journey.

The flower iris symbolizes hope, faith, and wisdom. Tulip: The tulip symbolizes perfect love and is often given as a gift to express hope and love. Sunflower: The sunflower symbolizes hope and positivity, and its bright yellow colour is associated with happiness and cheerfulness.

There are, in fact, thirteen flowers that symbolize hope: iris, cornflower, forget-me-not, passiflora, Bethlehem's star, common poppy, sunflower, chrysanthemum, lotus, yellow tulip, daffodil, almond blossom, and snowdrop. The symbolism is spread across many cultures, traditions, and religions around the world.

The scientific name of Philo Hope is "Philodendron bipinnatifidum." It belongs to the Araceae family. This beginner-level house plant is native to the tropical regions of South America. While it may start out small and fit in a sunny corner, it can grow to be up to five feet tall – and wide!

The Birch tree is known for its slender and mysterious appearance. But they are more than a dramatic sight in the forest. Due to their ability to withstand harsh conditions and make their way through ideal growth, they symbolize hope and the use of opportunities through example.

It seems that the original "Tree of Hope" was an elm that stood in the centre median opposite the Lafayette Theater at 131st Street and Seventh Avenue (now Adam Clayton Powell Boulevard). Many celebrated performers, including Bill "Bojangles" Robinson, rubbed the original tree for good luck.

Sowing seeds – for millennia – has been a powerful sign of hope. As we are reminded in John 12,24, "unless a seed falls into the ground and dies, it will only be a seed. If it dies, it will give much grain." I have found that living by giving – committing myself to live a life of helping God make the world a better place is an expression – and celebration - of hope.

Traditionally-artistically, the colour of faith is white, of love it is red, of hope it is green. The Italian flag has all of these colours. A happy chance? Or was it on purpose? Judging by Google, no one seems to know for sure.

Gaudium et Spes ("Joy and Hope"), the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, is one of the four constitutions resulting from the Second Vatican Council in 1966. It was the last and longest published document from the council and is the first constitution published by an ecumenical council to address the entire world.

Joy - a feeling of great pleasure or delight - is the child of hope. That feeling is produced when the neurotransmitters endorphin, dopamine, serotonin, nor-epinephrine, and melatonin, released by peripheral neurons and some glandular cells (adrenal, enterochromaffin cells, mast cells), are diverted into the bloodstream.

Joy is "a feeling that is evoked by wellbeing or good fortune," whereas happiness is defined as a "state of wellbeing." This implies that joy occurs - is elated - for a brief, defined period of time, whereas happiness is a state of being that is, for the most part, ongoing.

Joy cannot go beyond the boundaries of its own existence. But Delight comes from the soul's region, from our relationship with the transcendental Silence-Height we know as God. As it descends, it gradually illumines everything, even the gross physical. From the highest it comes to the lowest. Delight has tremendous power, but it descends very slowly. When it enters from the highest plane, it goes first to the spirit's arena, then to the psychic plane, the

mental plane, the vital plane, and then finally to the physical plane. Delight always descends very, very cautiously, and very steadily and unerringly.

Given the many conflicts around the world, from Russia-Ukraine, Hamas- Israel, Hezbollah - Israel, Israel-Iran, Yemen, Sudan, Myanmar, African Francophone countries and the tension between China and Taiwan - as well the state of the UK socially, financially and politically - many folk I have come across have lost hope. They are depressed. Some despair.

Thus, in May 2024, while, thanks to my beloved friends Brian and Toni Bentley, I was being driven from Banff back to their home in Saskatoon, Canada as part of the celebration of my 85th birthday, I felt urged to focus my attention on the virtue of hope, without which life is, indeed, grim.

Biblical characters like Abraham and Moses, people like St Paul and St Francis Xavier – whose character I chose for my confirmation name – raced through my mind. Though the times they lived were not easy, their lives were inspired by hope.

St Francis Xavier, SJ (1506 – 1552), a Basque Spaniard who co-founded the Society of Jesus.

When, aged eight, I read how Francis was ready to put up with some six months of sailing - and the grim diet on that journey - because he hoped to convert and baptise people in India. I was impressed. He became my hero. I chose him for my confirmation name. A 20th-century estimate puts the figure of those he baptised at around 30,000. A hope fulfilled!

He led an extensive mission into Asia, mainly the Portuguese Empire in the East, and was influential in evangelization work, most notably in early modern India. As representative of the king of Portugal, he was also the first major Christian missionary to venture into Borneo, the Maluku Islands, Japan, and other areas. In those areas, struggling to learn the local languages and in the face of opposition, he had less success than he had enjoyed in India. Xavier was about to extend his mission to Ming China, when he died on Shangchuan Island. What a man of hope!

I hope to please God - and hope with impunity. Whatever the outcome, the journey has been inspiring, entertaining and has made a difference in bringing to fruition the Kingdom of God locally.

Thanks to the existence of time, we can hope - and we can have fear. Time enables movement, change - for the better and, of course, for the worse.

Delight entered my life when, aged 15, I climbed the little hill on the island of Eriskay. One day, when John was playing with his friends, I decided to climb that hill, the highest point on Eriskay, passing on my way the skull and horns of a deceased sheep. At the top, I sat down, looked West across the Atlantic Ocean.

Suddenly something utterly unexpected happened. It is still there, within the memory in my heart, underpinning my identity and hopes. The only way I can put it is “I fell in love with infinity”. It was my Pentecostal Experience. I experienced the Divine Presence throughout my body.

I never asked for it, I never expected it. However, that moment — no idea how long it was before I climbed down that Benin Scathing peak of 185m — has stayed undiminished and fresh, glowing, solid still within my heart. Gradually, as the years went by, realised that that 'Infinity' was — and is - the One we tend to call 'God'. [More on this in “Life Squared”]

That experience altered my life 180 degrees. Instead of trying to be naughty so as to be accepted as 'a part of the gang' I started to study hard, to strive to be good — going to Mass every day before school.

Ever since Eriskay, I have been blessed with living in hope.

Creation - space-time - is not static. It is constantly on the move, evolving. It lives in – exists in – hope. Every part has its own speed of evolution. The human body, from its conception is born and breathes after some nine months. The alps, thanks to the movement of African and Eurasian tectonic plates have taken tens of millions of years to get to their present state and structure.

My body, rather than being is constantly becoming as I breathe and my blood circulates, and my brain thinks.

Every part of me is moving - living in time. I am a magnificently complex product of interactive events.

As soon as something scares you and you experience fear, your amygdala (small organ in the middle of your brain) goes to work. It alerts your nervous system, which sets your body's fear response into motion. Stress hormones like cortisol and adrenaline are released.

Perseverance and courage are children of hope. Hope faces fear. Staring down the potential for failure, hope refuses to be thwarted by pain, doubt or opposition.

When couples marry, most hope they will stay together for life. However, the latest data we have is that 42% end in divorce.

In 2022 – the latest data I was able to find - the median duration of marriages that ended in divorce (the mid-point of all durations) was 12.9 years for opposite-sex couples and 7.5 and 6.3 years for male and female same-sex couples, respectively.

In sport, the hopes of all but the winner will end up disappointed. So, if you are a competitor, why not learn these five steps to dealing with disappointment - and minimise the pain you suffer.

Step 1: Accept what has happened

Be upset in the moment and fully experience the emotions that you are feeling, don't ignore or downplay this as it is very important to deal with what you are feeling.

Step 2: Don't dwell on the past

Once you've dealt with the emotion and let it out then try to move on as soon as possible. Don't dwell on things in the past for too long because remember you can't change the past.

Step 3: Use setbacks as opportunities

Setbacks and disappointment are inevitable in anything worthwhile achieving, so expect them. We can use them as ways to learn, improve and better ourselves as a result. Often setbacks can give us extra motivation and drive to work harder and come back even stronger.

Step 4: Change your perspective

There are always at least two ways to view things so try to take the positive out of every situation no matter how bad it is. There is always a positive perspective in everything, sometimes you just have to look for it.

For example, the closure of ASPC – and thus SPEC and LOFT, enabled me to ask Cardinal Vincent to appoint me Sports Chaplain for – and stay in that role after – the 2012 London Games.

Step 5: Set future objectives

Remember that just because you've experienced a setback now, it doesn't mean you won't be successful in future so don't ever give up at the first hurdle.

It is those who keep getting up over and over again that succeed. To make this easier you can set yourself new objectives and things to work towards that can drive you forward.

One of my motivational mantras is "If the door is slammed shut – as it was when Cardinal Cormac removed me from working with young people - knock a hole in the wall and build a new one – as I did with 'John Paul 2 Foundation 4 Sport.'

Hope transcends time. It does not have - like time - a vector, a single trajectory. It lives in the Past. "I hope my exam answers yesterday were correct." The Present. "I hope I am at the right bus stop." And the Future. "I hope tomorrow will be full of sunshine."

Hope is a feeling that comes from a belief that all things will be okay, no matter what. If you believe in your heart that things will be okay even if you can't see the outcome, that is hope. This feeling of being okay will be followed by the emotions of contentment, an expression of joy.

Research indicates that the pro-typical, high-hope person appears to exhibit optimism, perceptions of control over one's life, perceived problem-solving ability, a preference for competition (but not winning itself), high self-esteem, and positive affectivity.

Neurotransmitters such as oxytocin, serotonin, and norepinephrine have been implicated in experiencing positive emotions and mood regulation, and thus may also underlie hope.

"Courage is one step ahead of fear," said Coleman Young (1918-1997) an American politician, the first African American mayor of Detroit, Michigan (1974–93). Imagining victory – hoping for victory - helps courage live on.

Eric Arthur Blair (1903-50), better known as George Orwell, went, in 1936, to fight in Barcelona. He feared the rise of Fascism -yet must have hoped he would help the cause of freedom. Fear can give birth to hope.

To make that happen, I soon learned that to hope I would succeed in my endeavours I had to be realistic and rather than use a creative blunderbuss, I chose to select, focus, commit, work, endure and learn - perhaps to alter my selection as time went by.

1. What is hope. What it is not.

In the textbooks, hope is "the confident expectation of what God has promised and its strength is in his faithfulness" or "A confident expectation and desire for future good., based on faith, a gift from God, looks to and waits for the future."

The word - in the Original Testament, *yachal* - appears 48 times. In the whole Bible, some 130 times. E.g. Isaiah 40,31. Josh 2,18. Jer 29,11. The New Testament continues to speak of God as the source and object of hope (Rom 15:13). However, as early Christians believed that Jesus Christ was the promised Messiah, hope was refocused on "God our Saviour, and of Christ Jesus, who is our hope" (1 Tim 1:1).

You may have noticed – or heard me teach – that the word ‘hope’ appears seven times after The Our Father at Mass.

Faith, charity and hope are gifts, as is my brain, body and place where I live.

For me, the Theological ‘(theological’ because they come directly as a gift from God) Virtues – in the order of causality – are faith, love and hope. Because I have been given the gift of faith, I know God loves me and thus I live in - and with - hope.

The theological virtue of hope is the power by which we desire the Kingdom of Heaven as our happiness, placing our trust in Christ's promises and relying not on our own strength, but on the grace of the Holy Spirit. Jesus will give us the graces that we need for the journey to Heaven. I do not use the word ‘theological’ because, as I see it, everything we are is a gift of God. My life is ‘theological’.

For me, in my heart, hope is like the drumbeat in Ravel’s Bolero. Constantly there. Thanks to God’s generosity, I am alive with resilient hope.

The siblings of hope are ambition, aspiration, anticipation, desiring, wishing, expecting and day-dreaming.

Ambition, desiring and aspiring tend to move the heart's body into action. Anticipating, wishing and expecting tend to be passively patient. Day-dreaming is totally inert.

Hope is not identical to optimism. According to the Cambridge Dictionary, hope is "something good that you want to happen in the future, or a confident feeling about what will happen in the future," and optimism is "the quality of being full of hope and emphasizing the good parts of a situation, or a belief that something good will happen."

In a study called *Distinguishing Hope from Optimism and Related Affective States*, researchers asked participants to define hope, optimism, and other related concepts such as wanting, desire, wishing, and joy, and to write about a time when they had experienced each

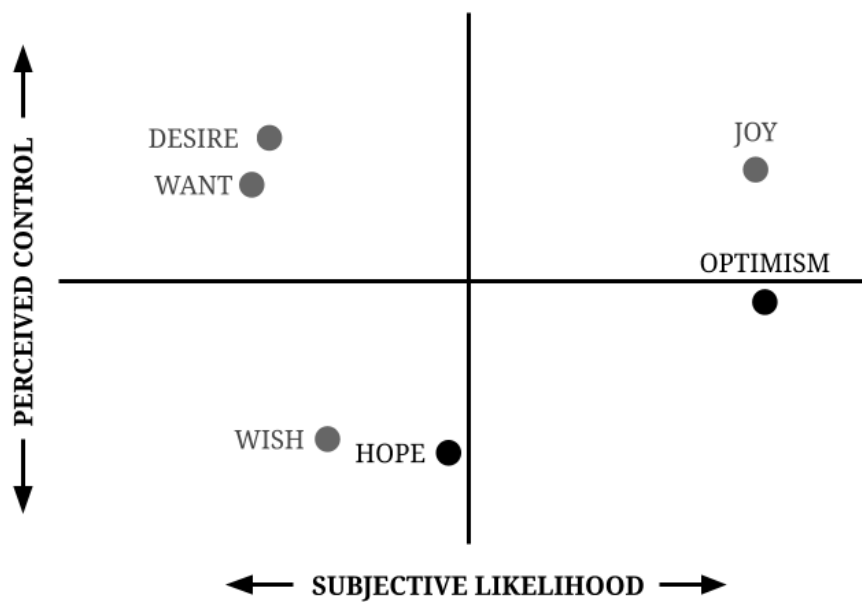
of these states. Overall, they found that “hope is most closely related to wishing but distinct from it. Most important, hope is distinct from optimism by being an emotion, representing more important but less likely outcomes, and by affording less personal control.”

As I write, the Labour Party have just won The 2024 General Election. Many – all those who voted for them - hope this will auger well for the future. Only time will tell if their hopes will be fulfilled.

When down-at-heart Tories said, " I never did hold up much hope" they could have said "I never thought we would succeed."

By the time the gospels were written, through His resurrection, Jesus had demonstrated his divinity and thus, alive in eternity at the centre of the theocentric wheel (see Appendix A), when he is said to have said "on the third day I will rise again," it was not a hope, but a fact as yet not experienced in the then current space-time.

Hope – a spiritual/psychological virtue - does not fade in the face of adversity; in fact, hope often endures despite poverty, war and famine. While no one is exempt from experiencing challenging life events, hope fosters an orientation to life that allows a grounded and optimistic outlook even in the most challenging of circumstances.



As you can see on this graph from this research paper, hope and optimism are not that similar to each other. They are on a spectrum and vary greatly in terms of subjective likelihood - how certain we are that the event will happen - and perceived control - how much we think we can influence the outcome.

Another study looked at football fans. The researchers found that fans of poorly performing football teams were pessimistic, yet hopeful. On the other hand, fans of top-tier teams that kept on winning, were more optimistic.

“Hope may be what individuals turn to when the prospect of obtaining their personally significant desire is unclear. As the invested participants became more confident of success, their hope scores aligned more with likelihood and followed a similar trajectory to that of optimism. It is at these high levels of likelihood that the more assured top-tier football team supported showed optimism to be indistinct from hope. This suggests that hope’s true and unique nature is in the realm of possibility, when individuals are dealing with greater uncertainty.”

Hope is not based on facts or reality. The only thing it is based on is a sense of optimism, but one that isn’t backed up by evidence. People also resort to hope when in fact, there is nothing to sustain them otherwise.

Martin Luther King, Jr (born 1929), an American Christian minister, activist, and political philosopher who was one of the most prominent leaders in the civil rights movement from 1955 until his assassination in 1968, reminded us that “we must accept finite disappointment, but never lose infinite hope.”

"Hope is a waking dream" claimed Greek philosopher Aristotle (384-322bce).

“Hope is a passion for the possible.” – Søren Kierkegaard (1813-1855) a Danish theologian, philosopher, poet, social critic, and religious author who is widely considered to be the first existentialist philosopher.

“Hope lives in those who believe in it.” “Stay hopeful; you never know what tomorrow will bring.” stated Siddhartha Gautama, most commonly referred to as the Buddha, a wandering ascetic and religious teacher who lived in South Asia during the 6th or 5th century BCE and founded Buddhism.

Despair is a light sleeper, easily awakened - and as suicides show, can be lethal.

“Never give up. Have hope. Expect only the best from life and take action to get it.” encouraged Catherine Pulsifer (1946-2013) who, living in USA, was involved practically reaching out to physically challenged kids to improve their lives.

The positive correlation between self-confidence and hope exists because self-confidence increases motivation levels and persistence. The better the evaluation that subjects make of themselves, the more they believe they can achieve the goals they desire.

Self-confidence does generate hope. When the golfer Frank Urban Zoeller Jr, (born 1951 and one of three golfers to have won the Masters Tournament in his first appearance in the event). faced - from the rough - with an awesome chip onto the green, was warned that there was a water obstacle ahead. “Only amateurs see the water” was his reply. And soon, onto the green, very close to the hole, his chip arrived safely.

Personally-generated Hope is more than wishful thinking. It's a blend of positive thinking and will power across our PIES of life. It is rooted in our spiritual life, supported by our emotions and directed by our intellect. It has a goal and a journey. It can be positive, heading for health. And negative, I hope the food I am eating is not-bad, fine.

It needs to be achievable rather than absurdly aspirational. Given my age and physique, it would be absurd for me to hope to win an Olympic medal.

Hope sees challenges, not difficulties and problems. It is a buffer against negative events or media expectations. Hope carries – it does not drag - its cross.

“Learn from yesterday, live for today, hope for tomorrow. The important thing is not to stop questioning,” taught Albert Einstein (1879-1955) German-born theoretical physicist who is widely held to be one of the greatest and most influential scientists of all time.

“All the great things are simple, and many can be expressed in a single word: Freedom, justice, honour, duty, mercy, hope.” Declared Winston Churchill.

Having set its goals, hope focuses on what is here and now. It does not dwell on the past or worry about the future. Hope sets us free to do our best here and now.

Hope is an optimistic state of mind that is based on an expectation of positive outcomes both globally and personally.

I hope there will be peace and no environmental cataclysm. My hope does not waste energy or time worrying about things over which I have no tangible influence.

On the other hand, my personal hopes have been commitments to achieving my goals, discovering or creating a pathway – which includes recruitment and collaboration with partners - to those goals and the energy – the will-power - to keep on keeping on until those goals have been reached.

Hopeful undertakings are like a breakfast of bacon and egg. You are, like the hen, either involved, or like the pig, committed. When given a job - like caring for young people or running pilgrimages - I always aimed to act like that pig. Committed hope tends to succeed.

Wise-committed hope is something else.

In my teaching days, I used to use ‘the wind and the sun’ story. They both see a beggar walking along wrapped in an old blanket.

Bursting with hope, the wind says to the sun, "I bet you I can remove that blanket." And so, the wind starts to blow ever harder. The beggar grips his blanket ever tighter. After half an hour, the wind gives up.

Then the sun comes out silently hopeful and starts to warm the beggar who soon takes off his blanket and carries it rolled up under his arm. What, dear reader, is the moral of that story to you? For me, it says, “to achieve your hope, select the appropriate means.”

Expectation is based on facts and reality and is formed from knowing an initial set of conditions. It has nothing to do with optimism.

e.g.

1.Regarding the future, If I am writing on Tuesday, I know tomorrow will be Wednesday. I expect to be alive and hope I will still be healthy.

2.Given the weather forecast, I expect it will indeed rain. Though I hope it won't.

Expectations can be harmful if they generate entitlement: like 'I expect to be given a job' rather than, 'given my qualifications and attitude, I hope to find a job.'

"England expects that every man will do his duty" was a signal sent by Vice-Admiral of the Royal Navy Horatio Nelson, 1st Viscount Nelson from his flagship HMS Victory as the Battle of Trafalgar was about to commence on 21 October 1805. Did he mean/imply 'demands'?

Predicting, anticipating, foreseeing and forecasting are the products of intellectual activity. Awaiting is a decision to let time pass by.

In 1943, US planners were predicting that 13% of US troops on D-Day would die, 25% would become casualties in the initial fighting on the beaches and, thereafter, 3% of US troops per week would become casualties in Normandy.

The British 12th Army Group predicted 9,250 casualties of the 70,000 British and Canadian troops landed on Sword, Juno and Gold beaches, about 13% casualties.

The first wave casualties on Utah, Sword, Gold and Juno beaches were far lower than expected.

Omaha Beach was different: about one third of the first wave assault troops became casualties.

In other words, hope is alive when you are uncertain about what will happen, feel like you have little control, but still wish for a positive outcome. In the case of optimism, you have more perceived control, and believe more in a positive outcome.

I happily identify with sacred scripture's take on hope.

Though the Gospels state Jesus hoped to rise to life after his death, on the cross - with its excruciating pain - this conviction seems to have evaporated " My God, my God, why have you abandoned me!" (Mt 16,46; Mk 15,34)

Annas and Caiaphas hoped they had got rid of the troublemaker Jesus of Nazareth. Big mistake.

Hope in the Original Testament.

Psalms 71,14: "As for me, I will always have hope; I will praise you more and more."

Micah 7:7. "But as for me, I watch in hope for the Lord, I wait for God my Saviour; my God will hear me."

Isaiah 40,8. "The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever"

Is 40,31: "Those who hope in The Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint."

Hope in the New Testament

"In his name the nations will put their hope" (Matthew 12:21). Jesus is quoting Isaiah 41,4.

"You are Peter and, on this rock, I will build my church. And the gates of the underworld can never overpower it." (Mt 16,18)

"I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." (Matthew 28:20).

The Prodigal Son parable (Lk15,11-32) declares the beauty of repentance hope. Falling down is not as important as getting up. As Peter discovered by the Sea of Galilee (Jn 21, 15-17). Though he had betrayed Jesus -and now professed his love – he was still in command to look after the Church, the lambs and sheep of Jesus Christ.

"We rejoice in hope of the glory of God" (Romans 5:2).

"Hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us." (Romans 5,5)

"Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer" (Romans 12:12).

Then there is,

1 Tim, 1,1 "Jesus Christ our hope". Tit 2,13; " the blessed hope." Ps 40,1 "I put all my hope in The Lord." Who is God, who is Jesus Christ. 1 Peter 1,3:" God...has caused us to be born again to a living hope..." Rm 14, 8: " whether we live or we die, we are the Lord's"

Jn 6,5-15; 17,22, in the Eucharist, we become Christ and thus alive with The Father and the Holy Spirit.

Every prayer of petition,- every Bidding Prayer at mass - directly to God, or aimed at a saint or Mary, the mother of Jesus, is an expression of hope.

Anyone who has a need or a dream hopes that prayer will enable them to achieve their target. After all, Jesus said " ask and you shall receive "(Mt 7,7)

As I remind the congregation at the start of every mass I celebrate, I offer the mass for the TAPS: to thank, ask, praise and say sorry, to apologise to God.

I thank God for what I have received to enable me to achieve my hopes. And I ask for what I - and those I love - need.

Unlike worldly hope, biblical - theological -hope is not based on your effort or desires, it is something received. The God of hope pours hope into you through the Holy Spirit.

“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope”(Romans 15:13).

“And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.”(1 Corinthians 13:13),

"Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful" (Hebrews 10:23).

“Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.” (Hebrews 11:1).

The virtue of faith enables us to believe in God and what the church teaches us, the virtue of charity love enables us to love God and to love our neighbour as ourselves, the virtue of hope enables us to trust in God's promise to share his life with us forever.

“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,”(1 Peter 1:3).

Jesus predicted that his words would endure, that he would die, betrayed; that his disciples would desert him, that Peter would deny him three times; that He would rise and the Holy Spirit would come.

However, I wonder what Jesus hoped to achieve?

He preached, and yearned for the Kingdom of God to become a reality on earth.

As I see it, given that a kingdom is a state and God is love, he wanted the world to live in and relate in love and thus *shalom*, a holistic peace. John 10,10 sums it up, it will be "life to the full."

Did he hope his followers would form a 'church', which thanks to St Paul they did, eventually, indeed create one.

Jesus lived a humble, living for others, life style.

Could he, in his humanity, have imagined – and hoped for - the Edict of Milan which in 313ce established religious tolerance for his followers – and then in 380, how the Emperor Theodosius converted Christianity into the official religion of the Roman Empire?.

Atheists hope there is no divine being. Big mistake! - as they will find out at their birth into divine eternity when they die. Atheists hope - they cannot prove - there is no creator God.

Personally, I do not hope - I know - there is the Creator God. Maybe, due to my four years at Imperial College studying Civil Engineering and Structures, I am convinced.

How else would there be eyes and ears - and the incredibly complex human brain - with all its magnificent functions?

Finding a watch on a beach would make intelligent folk think there must be a watchmaker somewhere. Compared to the complexity - and delicate design - of the human body, a watch is a simple structure.

I hope to be born into divine eternity - life with God - as soon as I die.

To make that possible - to pass through that narrow gate (Mt 7,13) - I strive to live the ten commandments and the eight beatitudes while making the world a better place (have a look at the Bio on my website 'fathervlad.com') now by celebrating the sacraments, writing and advising people; currently caring for a 91 year old dementia patient.

I look forward to meeting *Yesh* (*)face to face after my birth into divine eternity, and discovering His real answers to these questions.

Hope in Vatican 2 Council (1962-65)

In the last 1950s and early 60s, Western Culture was passing through a crisis – generating intellectual as well as emotional chaos – which culminated in the 1968 Paris and USA riots

Pope John XXIII, hoped that The Church might be able to sort things out. Launching Vatican 2, he stated - he hoped - that the Council would “modernization of the Church after 20 centuries of life.” This freshening of the Church's traditions is commonly referred to as *aggiornamento* (“bringing up to date” in Italian).

In December 1965, The Council concluded with the publishing of “*Gaudium et Spes*” (G&S), "Joy and Hope"), The Pastoral constitution on the Church in the modern world.

The central theme of the document is the establishment of those social conditions that can help safeguard three related values: (1) the dignity of the human person, (2) the common good, and (3) the unity of mankind.

The hopes for a more humane world expressed in G&S cannot be fulfilled without Christ, without welcoming his grace, which works invisibly in the hearts of every man of good will (G&S, 22): This conviction guides and upholds the Church's trajectory, particularly in 2024, marked as it is by shadows and uncertainties in The Holy Land, Ukraine, Yemen, Sudan and all too many Francophone African countries.

(*) For me, The Trinitarian Divinity is Abba, Yeshua and Ruah (Fem).

Jesus, The Christ, as a young man would have been known as Yeshua ben Yosef - Jesus son of Joseph.

And probably, was to his friends, 'Yesh'.

As he is my best friend - *anam cara* - Soul Friend or Soul Mate – for me he is Yesh.

That I how I address him in my prayer.

In my liturgy, I refer to him as Jesus – Christ: Jesus the Anointed. During my many years of teaching,

I discovered that all too many young people thought the Holy Family were Joseph Christ, Mary Christ and Jesus Christ. Christ, a surname.

G&S focuses on the role of the Church and its members in the world in areas ranging from politics to peace to the challenges of contemporary atheism to morality and service to the community. The document ultimately points to an authentic meaning of life that can be found only in Christ. While critiquing the major technological and social changes of the 20th century, G&S calls all people to a greater sense of authentic humanism, that is, to a sense of a role in the world that is based on a Christian humanism that preaches self-giving rather than self-promotion and is firmly rooted in the Gospels.

G&S states clearly that one cannot hope to live up to or develop his potential except by relating to others (12). In the words of the document itself: “The best way to fulfil one’s obligations of justice and love is to contribute to the common good according to one’s means and the needs of others, even to the point of fostering and helping public and private organizations devoted to bettering the conditions of life” (30)

Waiting at airports – and more recently St Pancras Eurostar lounge - enables me to see, close up, the glorious variety of God’ human creatures. Their shapes, sizes, colours, jewellery, tattoos, clothing and hairstyles and facial expressions are mesmerising.

William Shakespeare(1564-1616) on hope.

“The miserable have no other medicine but only hope.”(‘Measure for Measure’, Act 3 Scene 1)

“Oft expectation fails, and most oft there where most it promises; and oft it hits where hope is coldest, and despair most fits. True hope is swift, and flies with swallow's wings.”(‘All’s well that ends well’, Act 2, Scene 1)

“God shall be my hope, my stay, my guide and lantern to my feet.”(‘Henry VI, Part 2’, Act 2, Scene 3)

“Hope is a lover's staff; walk hence with that and manage it against despairing thoughts.” (‘The Two Gentlemen of Verona, Act 3, Scene 1)

A pun is made by Capulet on the words, "earth" and "hope" in Romeo and Juliet, Act 1, Scene 2.

Capulet says, 'The earth hath swallowed all my hopes but she; She's the hopeful lady of my earth.'

Juliet is the only one of the Capulet's children to survive; all of his other children are buried, swallowed by the "earth." The expression, "lady of the earth" refers to an heiress who will inherit a large estate. As his only surviving child, the "hopeful" (promising) Juliet represents Capulet's last "hope" to have future generations of descendants.

T.S Eliot(1888-1965) on Hope

A poem.

"I said to my soul, be still, and wait without hope
For hope would be hope for the wrong thing; wait without love,
For love would be love of the wrong thing; there is yet faith
But the faith and the love and the hope are all in the waiting.
Wait without thought, for you are not ready for thought:
So the darkness shall be the light, and the stillness the dancing.
Whisper of running streams, and winter lightning.
The wild thyme unseen and the wild strawberry,
The laughter in the garden, echoed ecstasy
Not lost, but requiring, pointing to the agony
Of death and birth."

"The very existence of libraries affords the best evidence that we may yet have hope for the future of man." A statement ascribed to T. S. Eliot within the 1999 book "Shelf Life: How Books Have Changed the Destinies and Desires of Men and Nations" by George and Karen Grant. The remark was grouped with other quotations about libraries in a chapter called "Literary Collections"

T.S. Eliot's, "Only those who will risk going too far can possibly find out how far one can go." encourages us to challenge ourselves - to hope to go beyond our perceived capabilities.

After the chart success of 1963, the song - a show tune from the 1945 Rodgers and Hammerstein musical Carousel - by Gerry and the Pacemakers gained popularity among Liverpool F.C. fan. This hope-filled song quickly became the football anthem of the club, which adopted "You'll Never Walk Alone" as its official motto on its coat of arms.

"When you walk through a storm
Hold your head up high
And don't be afraid of the dark
At the end of a storm
There's a golden sky
And the sweet silver song of a lark

Walk on through the wind
Walk on through the rain
For your dreams be tossed and blown
Walk on, walk on
With hope in your heart
And you'll never walk alone
You'll never walk alone
Walk on, walk on
With hope in your heart
And you'll never walk alone
You'll never walk alone.”

I will end this section with words from Nelson Mandela (1918-2013) “May your choices reflect your hopes, not your fears.” His own life certainly did.

And “The Road Not Taken”, by Robert Frost (USA, 1874 –1963)
makes it clear that life is all about choices and thus there is hope.

“Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveller, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
I took the one less travelled by,
And that has made all the difference.”

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It is wise to consider carefully what do you hope to achieve through the choices you make.

For example, think ‘vocation’. What a person senses God wants them to be and live – is a hope. Many, who present themselves to a bishop or religious mother, are turned down after a time under observation. They do not seem to have what it takes, what is needed.

Some apply because they think “I ought” What they need to show is that “I want” is there in their heart. The role of religious leaders, who have to turn down those they deem not to have that vocation, is painful; for them as for those rejected.

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The Bright Field – looking for the best

I have seen the sun break through
to illuminate a small field
for a while, and gone my way
and forgotten it. But that was the
pearl of great price, the one field that had
treasure in it. I realise now
that I must give all that I have
to possess it. Life is not hurrying
on to a receding future, nor hankering after
an imagined past. It is the turning
aside like Moses to the miracle
of the lit bush, to a brightness
that seemed as transitory as your youth
once, but is the eternity that awaits you.

R S Thomas(1913-2000)

2. Types of hope.

As I see it, there are eight types of hope: the active, the passive/patient, the mixed active - passive and the past, present and future – and the disappointed and conditional.

The pro-active works with determination to achieve its aim. These hopes are included in ‘Investment – or funded hopes’.

Just think how much money – and time and energy – people invest in researching cancer, Alzheimer’s, Cardiovascular, as well as dental and gastrointestinal diseases TB, HIV/AIDS malaria – as well as supporting the RSPCA, Sight savers and Brooke’s hospital for horses. And the millions people plough into US Presidential Candidate elections.

In WW2 the Japanese hoped their Kamikaze attacks would prevent the USA moving on to invade Japan.

From October 1944 until the end of the war, 2,550 Kamikaze missions were flown - with, thank God - only 475 (or 18.6%) achieving a hit or a damaging near miss. Warships of all types were damaged including 12 aircraft carriers, 15 battleships, and 16 light and escort carriers. However, the Japanese hopes of victory ended in defeat

I have learned that the passive has to be patient as – for example – having made the telephone call, it waits patiently – no use getting upset - for a night-nurse to turn up and clear the blocked catheter of the 91-year-old I am looking after.

A silly story to help you, dear reader, realise that “My ways are not your ways” says the Lord (Is 55,8)

Talking dog

In August 2024, a cash-in-hand job done, our man is walking home. He passes a pet-shop. An idea lights up in his mind. He walks in.

“I am looking something special. What might have you on offer?”

“Well, we have a boa-constrictor.”

“Hm, better not, my wife would not fancy that.”

“Well there is an alligator...”

“Better not, it might fancy my wife.”

“Well sir, we do have a talking dog.”

“Absurd!”

“No, just a moment, sir”

“Bonzo!!!”

A little black dog dances through the back door.

“Go on, sir, ask him a question.”

“What is the capital of France?”

Bonzo replies: “Paris”

“Err, who is the prime minister of the UK?”

“Kier Starmer” chips in Bonzo.

“Brilliant. Perfect. I’ll take him.”

Our man leads Bonzo round to his pub. Places him on a stool and waits for the lads to come in.

“What have you got there?”

“A talking dog.”

“Come orf it. Bet you - evens - it can’t speak,”

All his pals chorus that. Money is spread along the bar.

“Bonzo, what is the capital of France?”

Silence

“Bonzo!! Who is the Prime Minister?”

Silence. Then uproar – and guffawing laughter. Money is swept up. Our man finishes his pint leads Bonzo out slowly.

They stop under a lamppost.

“Bonzo, you betrayed me! I’ll....”

Bonzo looks up, cocks his head to one side and says: “But think of the odds we’ll get next week.”

Patience. God – dog to the dyslexic- knows best. Trust God. Hope in God. Easier now than it was for the followers of Jesus of Nazareth on Good Friday afternoon.

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The mixed one hopes to be rescued and keeps sending up flares to attract attention to its plight. A hitchhiker keeps his thumb up in the air – or used to when I hitched hiked some 65

years ago – hopefully. Once inside the car, my passive hope hoped our conversation would be interesting.

Passive hope can be frustrating – and painful. In 2010 the waiting list for hospital treatment in England was 2.6 million. In 2024 it is now 7.6 million.

Passive/patient hope is not enough. We can hope to have enough solar energy in the future if now we build more solar panels.

Countries with thin water supplies can hope to have enough water if they invest in technology such as Hydrasyst filters and thus can reuse, time and again, the water they have.

NATO countries can hope to avoid war with Russia by investing at least 2.5% of their national budget in defence.

I can hope to stay fit by keeping up my exercises and not increasing my calories intake.

I can hope to stay hopeful by maintaining my prayer life.

I can hope to keep my friends by acting as a friend to all of them.

I can hope to avoid dementia by keeping up my intellectual endeavours, drinking lots of coffee a bit of olive oil every day and making sure my diet includes enough vitamin D.

Past. ‘I hope I passed the exam.’ ‘I had hoped you would come.’

Present. ‘I hope - I like to think, to imagine - you are feeling better.’

Future. ‘I wish, I hope you will forgive me.’ Or dream: ‘I hope to explore the countryside during my vacation. An expectation: I hope to live to a healthy and sane - old age.’

As we get older, we accumulate disappointed hopes. Just a couple of mine.

Having experienced Cardinal Basil Hume close up, I had hoped his successors would be like him.

Currently supporting a Paraguayan Political prisoner held without trial in HMPs for - so far for nine year - I had hoped British Justice was fair.

How many football fans have to be disappointed every time a match is won by the opposition and lost by their own team. In those days when England still had factories, their disappointed hope was statistically palpable in lower productivity the following week.

Hope straddles time.

‘I hope to see you tomorrow’

‘I hope I now have the correct address.’

‘I hope yesterday’s exam went well.’

Hope across the PIES dimensions of human life.

The Physical

People who work to ameliorate the medical, nutritional and economic condition of humanity work with hope: determined to keep on making progress.

The Intellectual.

Literacy and educational endeavours - apart for women in places like Afghanistan - hope to improve the lives of all, especially those currently marginalised.

The Emotional

Parents hope to teach their children how to live lovingly with their family and neighbours. Psychologists and psychiatrists hope to enable the damaged to develop and enhance their abilities to relate.

The Spiritual

The leaders and practitioners of every faith hope to improve the spiritual life - the relationship with the divine - of all within their reach.

With the PIES developed to their maximum, folk can delight in "life to the full." (Jn 10,10)

Hope can change from a dream - Churchill 's uncertain hope to beat Hitler prior to Pearl Harbor – to a conviction. Churchill's hope became adamantine after Pearl Harbor. He knew, he just had to wait, to be patient. It was bound to happen.

Initially, he hoped - he dreamed and did his best to make it happen - that the USA would come to his help to vanquish Hitler and the Nazis.

Then came Pearl Harbor, the pivotal event that changed everything. Hitler was sufficiently delusional to declare war on the USA. With the USA vastly superior manufacturing ability, it was clear that the Allies would win. Churchill's hope turned to conviction that victory would arrive, sooner or later. His hope became adamantine. He knew that while battles may be won by the military, it is factories that win wars. America would out-produce Japan, Italy and German. It sure did!

After Pearl Harbor, the Japanese, hoped that they would destroy the US carrier fleet in a victory so decisive that the United States would negotiate for peace. Their hopes were dashed first at the battle of Midway and then, utterly destroyed, at the battle of the Philippine Sea.

In my life something similar happened - many times.
Just two examples.

The first was in Rome, 1969. Having compiled my doctoral thesis, "The relationship between creation and redemption in Vatican two".

I hoped to obtain my doctorate. After its moderator, Msgr Vladimir Boublik, suggested I alter its structure - which, initially reluctantly, I did. My hope grew in it's certainly.

Then, during the viva voce interview, once I made the examiners laugh, my hope turned to conviction-hope.

I had been asked what the term. 'Creation' meant and, having said it meant 'production from nothing - and that is why cardinals are created rather than appointed,' I knew I was there, *summa cum laude*.

The second was when Uncle George - Cardinal Basil Hume - asked me to help young people find God in their lives, I hoped I could do that. Once SPEC was up and running, I knew I would. I was convinced I would. Thanks to Team – led by Sandra and David Satchell - I was doing that (Ref. Volume 3 of my ‘A Journey to Eternity’).

Conditional hope.

Once we recognise our weaknesses, we can hope to make the best fist of your life. Until then, we may be walking around in circles rather than making progress to fulfilling our potential.

Looking after a 91year old with dementia, my hope for her is that she does not suffer excessively and my hope for me is that I do not lose my patience - too often too violently as I try to treat her as *Yesh* (Mt 25,40).

If you interested in history and hope to get to 'the truth', remember that that though the past may shape the present, it is the present that - certainly in totalitarian countries - shapes the past. Under Stalin it was said that Russian history was unpredictable.

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The tennis player Arthur Ashe (1943-93) stated his philosophy on hope in three very short sentences: "Start where you are. Use what you have. Do what you can." It served him rather well. He won three Grand Slam titles in singles and two in doubles. Ashe was the first black player selected to the United States Davis Cup team, and the only black man ever to win the singles titles at Wimbledon, the US Open, and the Australian Open.

Explorers who travelled in hope include

Christopher Columbus (1451-1506), hoping to discover western seaway to India set out on his hope-fuelled transatlantic journey – to end up discovering just the West Indies. In 1493, he wrote a letter that would change the landscape of the modern world. "I sailed to the Indies with the fleet that the illustrious King and Queen, our sovereigns, gave me, where I discovered a great many islands, inhabited by numberless people."

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The Portuguese nobleman Vasco da Gama (1460-1524) sailed from Lisbon in 1497 – travelling around the Cape of Good Hope in South Africa – hoping to reach India and open a sea route from Europe to the East. Spices had been coming overland but at considerable cost as, passing through the various countries, they had to pay taxes. A sea route would save money - or, more likely, make more money for the traders. He arrived in Culicut in 1498. His hope had been realised.

Roald Amundsen (1872 – 1928) Amundsen was a Norwegian explorer and a key figure in the heroic age of Antarctic exploration. His Antarctic expedition of 1910-12 hoped to discover the South Pole. Beating Captain Robert Falcon Scott, he arrived there first.

Thirteen years before he became the first person ever to reach the south pole in 1911, Amundsen experienced his first merciless taste of winter in the Antarctic. Stuck onboard the Belgian expedition ship *Belgica*, which was grounded in pack ice, he and the rest of the crew contracted scurvy and faced certain death.

Amundsen started eating raw penguin meat – and discovered a secret that would later give him a huge advantage over Scott in the race to the south pole.

“If you eat almost any kind of meat, as long as it’s raw enough, you can get the vitamin C that the body requires to avoid scurvy,” said Julian Sancton, in his book, *Madhouse at the End of the Earth*.

In 1926, Amundsen led the first successful expedition to reach the North Pole. He also made the first voyage through the Northwest Passage.

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Marco Polo (1254 – 1324), a Venetian traveller and explorer hoped to introduce Europeans to China and Central Asia.

Although he was not the first European to travel to China, he was the first to write about his adventures and so it was his experiences that formed the basis of early European knowledge of the country.

Marco Polo brought back the idea of paper money and some think his descriptions of coal, eyeglasses and a complex postal system eventually led to their widespread use in Europe.

His journeys and writings helped to open up the Far East to Europe and inspired Christopher Columbus and many other explorers.

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John Cabot (1450 – 1499) an experienced Italian seafarer, came to live in England during the reign of Henry VII. In 1497 he sailed west from Bristol hoping to find a shorter route to Asia, a land believed to be rich in gold, spices and other luxuries.

In the event, he discovered parts of North America (later named Newfoundland) This is widely considered to be the first European discovery of North America since the Viking journeys of the 11th Century.

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Sir Walter Raleigh (1552 – 1618), an English explorer who hoped to challenge Spanish colonial policy. made several journeys to the Americas and also led expeditions in search of the legendary ‘El Dorado’. Raleigh was also granted a royal patent to explore Virginia in America.

Raleigh is given ‘credit’ for introducing both tobacco and potatoes to Britain, although both of these were already known from Spanish explorers. Raleigh certainly helped to make smoking popular at court and was convinced tobacco was a good cure for coughs. What a hope!

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James Cook (1728 – 1779), On 25 May 1768, the Admiralty commissioned Cook to command a scientific voyage to the Pacific Ocean. The voyage hoped to observe and record the 1769 transit of Venus across the Sun which, when combined with observations from other places, would help to determine the distance of the Earth from the Sun.

Cook was in Tahiti, having led the expedition to observe the transit of Venus across the sun by astronomer Charles Green and others. When he read the secret instructions, which revealed that he had a second mission: to find the mysterious alleged southern continent 'Terra Australis', and claim it for Britain.

Thus, it came to pass, that Cook made the first European contact with the Eastern coast of Australia. He then chartered the islands of the Pacific from New Zealand to Hawaii.

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David Livingstone (1813-1872), a popular Victorian missionary who explored the continent of Africa, hoped to find the source of the Nile and spent years travelling through the inner heart of Africa. He was opposed to slavery and supported commercial trade with Africa.

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Leif Eriksson (970-1020), a Norse explorer went to North America hoping to find a land rich with vines and grapes, where Greenland could start a colony. Leif did find the land, which he called 'Vinland'. There he established a settlement in around 1000ce - almost 500 years before the more celebrated Christopher Columbus 'discovered' America. It is believed he was born in Iceland.

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Sir Francis Drake (1540 – 1597), an English explorer who made the second successful circumnavigation of the world in 1577-1580. The original purpose of the trip was to raid Spanish ships and ports. The expedition left Plymouth on 13 December. It comprised of five ships: the Pelican, Elizabeth, Marigold, Swan, and Christopher, manned by a total of 164 seamen.

Drake known for many accomplishments, all of which were achieved because of his determined hope to end the Spanish dominance on land and on the seas. His intense hatred for the Spaniards began in 1567 when he joined the slave trade in Africa. He also fought the Spanish Armada in 1588.

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The British National Anthem is a hymn of hope.

In its present form dates back to the eighteenth century. The words and tune are anonymous, and may date back to the seventeenth century.

'God Save The King' was a patriotic song first publicly performed in London in 1745, which came to be known as the National Anthem at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

In September 1745 the 'Young Pretender' to the British Throne, Prince Charles Edward Stuart, defeated the army of King George II at Prestonpans, near Edinburgh.

In a fit of patriotic fervour after news of Prestonpans had reached London, the leader of the band at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, arranged 'God Save The King' for performance after a play. It was a tremendous success and was repeated nightly.

This practice soon spread to other theatres, and the custom of greeting monarchs with the song as he or she entered a place of public entertainment was thus established.

There is no authorised version of the National Anthem as the words are a matter of tradition. Additional verses have been added down the years, but these are rarely used.

The words used today are those sung in 1745. On official occasions, only the first verse is usually sung.

The words of the National Anthem are as follows:
God save our gracious King!

“Long live our noble King!
God save the King!
Send him victorious,
Happy and glorious,
Long to reign over us,
God save the King.

Thy choicest gifts in store
On him be pleased to pour,
Long may he reign.
May he defend our laws,
And ever give us cause,
To sing with heart and voice,
God save the King.”

In 2006, a BBC survey suggested that 55% of the UK would prefer Land of Hope and Glory – which is sung as England walk out onto a rugby field.



A few historical characters moved by hope.

Moses (Born, Goshen, Lower Egypt. Died, Mount Nebo, Moab.)

Most of what is known about Moses from the Bible comes from the books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. The majority of scholars consider the compilation of

these books to go back to the Persian period, 538–332 BCE, but based on earlier written and oral traditions.

According to the Bible, Moses had hope and unfailing confidence in God's promises. He was however, just an ordinary man with an unusual start in life, who made big mistakes due to his human weaknesses and emotions, but who grew into his God-given calling to lead the Israelite people with courage, humility and hope.

Moses' hopes were raised when the Jewish elders believed that God had sent him, just as God had promised. But his hopes were dashed when Pharaoh rejected Moses' requests and retaliated against the Jews, even though God had warned him in advance that this would happen.

So, Moses led the Jews out of slavery in Egypt towards the Holy Land that God had promised them.

Martin Luther (1483-1546) hoped to reform The Church. Instead, he destroyed its unity.

Michelangelo's hope of producing a masterpiece drove him to paint - and keep on painting - the Sistine chapel. Commissioned by Pope Julius II in 1508. He worked for four years from 1508 to 1512 to complete his masterpiece.

The first person to apply for a patent on a telescope was Hans Lippershey, a lens-maker in the Netherlands, in 1608. After learning of the new device, the great Italian scientist Galileo Galilei (1564-1642) - hoping to discover the facts about the visible universe - designed and built his own.

Marie Curie (1867-1934) who - damaging her own health in her hope to push the boundaries of science to improve humanity's health - carried out pioneering research on radioactivity - and discovered polonium and radium.

Cardinal Basil Hume OSB OM - Uncle George to his family (1923-99) was a man of hope. I knew him well.

In January 1989, as soon as he returned to Archbishop's House from his Christmas break at Hare Street and I had come up into his office to welcome him with the usual banalities and jokes about his time away, Father Basil suddenly said: "Have you a moment, Vlad." "For you, of course." And I sat down next his desk – right hand side.

The words he came up with etched themselves into me memory: "Vlad, we have to do something to help young people find God in their lives. I don't know what it is. But would you do it?"

Having been an Abbot, he knew how to butter people up to make sure he got his ways. So, he continued, "I can think of someone to run the Cathedral, the Seminary, the University Chaplaincy but I cannot think of anyone but you to do this." So, of course, I said "yes."

Father Basil then added, “I would love to have our own diocesan pilgrimage to Lourdes. I am sure you could also organise our Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes.” I said, “of course”. At that time, Westminster was – with Brentwood and Plymouth dioceses – still a part of “The National” from which all other dioceses had hived themselves off years ago.

He hoped we could help people come closer to God. He hoped I would do it. I hope he will be remembered for many years to come: a great human with a deep love of God.

Uncle George, to thank me just before he died, asked the Holy Father to appoint me ‘Prelate of Honour’. Hence my title of Monsignor.

Coming from Uncle George I was chuffed. Every time I see or hear my title, I am reminded – with deep gratitude – of the one who got me that honour.

Hope in civil engineering projects.

Just two, the vast transcontinental railways in USA and Canada.

America's first transcontinental railroad (known originally as the "Pacific Railroad" and later as the "Overland Route") was a 1,911-mile (3,075 km) continuous railroad line built between 1863 and 1869 that connected the existing eastern U.S. rail network at Council Bluffs, Iowa, with the Pacific coast at the Oakland Long Wharf on San Francisco Bay.

The rail line was built by three private companies over public lands provided by extensive U.S. land grants. Building was financed by both state and U.S. government subsidy bonds as well as by company-issued mortgage bonds. The Western Pacific Railroad Company built 132 miles (212 km) of track from the road's western terminus at Alameda/Oakland to Sacramento, California. The Central Pacific Railroad Company of California (CPRR) constructed 690 miles (1,110 km) east from Sacramento to Promontory Summit, Utah Territory. The Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) built 1,085 miles (1,746 km) from the road's eastern terminus at the Missouri River settlements of Council Bluffs and Omaha, Nebraska, westward to Promontory Summit.

The railroad opened for through traffic between Sacramento and Omaha on May 10, 1869, when CPRR President Leland Stanford ceremonially tapped the gold "Last Spike" (later often referred to as the "Golden Spike") with a silver hammer at Promontory Summit. In the following six months, the last leg from Sacramento to San Francisco Bay was completed. The resulting coast-to-coast railroad connection revolutionized the settlement and economy of the American West. It brought the western states and territories into alignment with the northern Union states and made transporting passengers and goods coast-to-coast considerably quicker, safer and less expensive.

While Chinese workers dominated the railroad workforce in the West, most eastern and southern railroad companies relied on Black Americans to do the back-breaking construction work.

With the addition of British Columbia, Canada extended from the Atlantic to the Pacific. To maintain that vast area and to ensure its independence from the United States, it was necessary to build a railway to the west coast. The railway was first built between eastern Canada and British Columbia between 1881 and 1885 (connecting with Ottawa Valley and

Georgian Bay area lines built earlier), fulfilling a commitment extended to British Columbia when it entered Confederation in 1871; the CPR was Canada's first transcontinental railway

J F Kennedy hoped to put humanity on the moon.

The US space program went full throttle in 1961 when President John F. Kennedy challenged the nation to claim a leadership role in space and land a man on the Moon before the end of the decade.

On May 25, 1961, he stood before a joint session of Congress to deliver a special message on "urgent national needs." He asked for an additional \$7 billion to \$9 billion over the next five years for the space program, proclaiming that "this nation should commit itself to achieving the goal, before the decade is out."

Eventually – before the end of the decade - on July 20th, 1969 Commander Neil Armstrong and Lunar Module Pilot Buzz Aldrin landed the Apollo Lunar Module Eagle on the moon, JFK's hope had been fulfilled.

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Global hopes

In 2017, the UN was predicting that the world's population – about eight billion today – would climb to 11.2 billion by 2100. It now predicts that it will peak at around 10.4 billion in 2080 and start declining; some demographers project that this will happen decades earlier. This would be the first such global-population decline since the Black Death in the Middle Ages.

There are those who hope this will happen – and not just save the planet, but reduce the pressure on housing and increase job security.

There others who hope it will not occur. There are two main concerns. One is that people are having fewer children than they want. Polls suggest that UK women on average want between two and three children.

The Second is the economic dimension. A shrinking population means that more jobs will go unfilled and economic dynamism will reduce. The most immediate fear is that welfare systems – which rely on people of working age to pay in and support the elderly – will be underfunded.

Today, the G7 richest economies have roughly three people of working age for everyone over 65, but by 2050 they will have fewer than two. In South Korea, which has the world's lowest fertility rate (0.72), the national pension fund is expected to run out of cash by 2055.

Hope in the Holocaust

In 1938 and 1939, nearly 10,000 children fleeing the persecution of Jews in Germany, Austria and Czechoslovakia were brought to Britain on the Kindertransport ('children's transports').

The United Kingdom took in nearly 10,000 children, most of them Jewish, from Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Poland, and the Free City of Danzig. The children were placed in British foster homes, hostels, schools, and farms. All too often, they were the only members of their families who survived the Holocaust.

Sir Nicholas George Winton MBE (né Wertheim; 19 May 1909 – 1 July 2015) a British stockbroker and humanitarian, helped to rescue Jewish children who were at risk of being murdered by Nazi Germany during the Holocaust.

Born to German-Jewish parents who had immigrated to Britain at the beginning of the 20th century, Winton assisted in the rescue of 669 children from Czechoslovakia on the eve of World War II. Most of them were Jewish,

On a brief visit to Czechoslovakia, he helped compile a list of children needing rescue and, on his return to Britain, he worked to fulfil the legal requirements of bringing the children to Britain and found homes and sponsors for them. This operation was later known as the Czech *Kindertransport* (German for 'children's transport').

His humanitarian accomplishments remained unknown and unnoticed by the world for nearly 50 years until 1988 when, invited to the BBC television programme *That's Life!*, he was reunited with dozens of the children he had helped come to Britain - and was introduced to many of their children and grandchildren.

The British press celebrated him and dubbed him the "British Schindler". In 2003, Winton was knighted by Queen Elizabeth II for "services to humanity, in saving Jewish children from Nazi-occupied Czechoslovakia".

In 2014, he was awarded the highest honour of the Czech Republic, the Order of the White Lion (1st class), by Czech President Miloš Zeman. Winton died in 2015, aged 106. An outstanding life filled with hope.

3. Benefits of hope.

Let's start with a true story with its unforeseen – un hoped for - consequences.

Mr. Holland - the son of James and Hannah Holland, he was born in London in 1843 and became one of the partners in the building firm of Winslow & Holland with offices in Bloomsbury. Mr Holland was not born of a Catholic family but he became a convert thanks to the office boy in his employ who - hoping to serve God as God deserved to be served - would ask his employer for permission for time off to go to Mass on Holydays.

Mr. Taprell Holland, aware of the propensity for young men to want to bury their grandmothers when they wanted time off, sought to verify this variation of the excuse by following him one day.

He was so impressed by his devotion in the church and how quickly the boy returned to the office that he took instruction in the Catholic faith and became a Catholic himself.

Despite intensive research it has not been possible to discover where and when he was received into the church. In thanksgiving for his conversion Mr Holland decided that he wanted to build a splendid church. With the approval of the Cardinal he chose a prime site in the middle of Watford in an area that was rapidly being developed; now The Holy Rood Church.(Worth a visit!)

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“All the art of living lies in a fine mingling of letting go and holding on,” stated Havelock Ellis(1859-1939).

Then from The Buddha(563-480BCE, “in the end these things matter most: How well did you love? How fully did you love? How deeply did you learn to let go?”

And a Zen proverb, “Knowledge is learning something every day. Wisdom is letting go of something every day.”

Key virtues across the PIES are Temperance, Prudence, Fortitude and Justice.

Virtues vanquishing the seven capital sins are humility, generosity, chastity, peace, temperance, affectionate love and diligence. We all can hope to acquire and live these virtues and thus delight in successful lives.

If you were asked ‘why aim to have hope?’ Remind your interlocutor that hope has three children: resilience, joy and delight.

Resilience, across the PIES. Falling down is not as important as getting up.

Rather than dig in to sustain resilience, it is far better to hope to improve it – thanks to hope.

I strive to emulate the resilience of my hero and friend *Yesh*.

Authentic Hope is stronger than fear.

Without hope it is impossible to delight in life to the full.

I am alive hopefully. Hope, I believe, is a powerful ingredient that keeps me looking younger than my physical age.

For many young people, a lack of hope stems from a sense of isolation, a sense that no one shares their values and that they are not cared for by others. Caring about people outside of one’s own circle of friends and family presents a challenge in a world where such concern is not a common value. I remember a quote from a song that was a favourite of some of my student friends, “ Goodbye cruel world, I’m off to join the circus. I’m going to be a broken-hearted clown”.

Caring for youth and helping them develop the strength to face the challenges in their lives involves fostering hope and not promising the impossible. Optimism carries the belief that things will turn out right. It is not the same as hope, which is an abiding, psychological, sociological, and political faith that our world can be better if only we do our best.

Hope promises nothing material but promotes dignity, self-respect, and a spirit of struggle. Creating hope in oneself as a teacher and nourishing or rekindling it in one's students is the central issue educators face these days.

The novelist George Eliot wrote in 'Middlemarch' that "if youth is the season of hope, it is often so only in the sense that our elders are hopeful about us". This is a profound truth that caring adults must internalize and practice. We cannot teach hope unless we ourselves are hopeful, not merely in a general sense but in specific ways for individual children. Teaching hope involves focusing on strengths and cultivating a hopeful learning community.

One way to teach young people hope is to get them to realise – make real – their talents and strengths across their PIES.

Hope, and more specifically, particularized hope, has been shown to be an important part of the recovery process from illness; it has strong psychological benefits for patients, helping them to cope more effectively with their disease. For example, hope motivates people to pursue healthy behaviours for recovery, such as eating fruits and vegetables, quitting smoking, and engaging in regular physical activity.

This not only helps to enhance people's recovery from illnesses but also helps prevent illness from developing in the first place. Patients who maintain high levels of hope have an improved prognosis for life-threatening illness and an enhanced quality of life. Belief and expectation, which are key elements of hope, block pain in patients suffering from chronic illness by releasing endorphins which mimick the effects of morphine.

Consequently, through this process, belief and expectation can set off a chain reaction in the body that can make recovery from chronic illness more likely. This chain reaction is especially evident with studies demonstrating the placebo effect, a situation when hope is the only variable aiding in these patients' recovery.

Overall, studies have demonstrated that maintaining a sense of hope during a period of recovery from illness is beneficial. A sense of hopelessness during the recovery period has, in many instances, resulted in adverse health conditions for the patient (i.e. depression and anxiety following the recovery process).

Additionally, having a greater amount of hope before and during cognitive therapy has led to decreased PTSD-related depression symptoms in war veterans. Hope has also been found to be associated with more positive perceptions of subjective health. However, reviews of research literature have noted that the connections between hope and symptom severity in other mental health disorders are less clear, such as in cases of individuals with schizophrenia. Hope is a powerful protector against chronic or life-threatening illnesses.

A person's hope (even when facing an illness that will likely end their life) can be helpful by releasing joy or comfort. It can be created and focused on achieving life goals, such as meeting grandchildren or attending a child's wedding. Hope can be an opportunity for us to process and go through events, that can be traumatic. Realising I am soon to die, my hope of meeting *Yesh* - and indeed the full Divine Trinity - face to face sooner will – I hope – keep me calm and cheerful.

In my wedding homilies, I summarise what I had been teaching in to the couple in preparation for their Big Day:

“A marriage is a sacrament in which God – who is love – becomes an outward sign of an inward grace or gift.
Love – to be real – has to be there across the PIES
The physical includes tidying things up
The Intellectual should always be ACE
Affirming Consoling and Encouraging
As Father, Son, Holy Spirit. So husband, wife and family.
Equality! It is a merger NOT an acquisition.
Appreciate AND respect the other.
Mutual gift of husband and wife.
I – you – become a We.
Wed to make the other joyful.
Forgive: wash white, not whitewash.
NEVER “That was 15 years ago” “Yes, but you did it.”
Problem?
Seek Solution in prayer and with genuine – positive – friends!
Rely on community – friends’ – cohesive – support.
Imperfect? Of course. You are human. “Better together than apart”
Resilience.
“Falling down is not as important as getting up. Growing wiser.
Gentle with the other’s dreams.
Humour – vital adhesive.
‘Darling, if you ever left me, could I come with you?’”

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Many years ago, I was moved by the Christmas Carol:

“O little town of Bethlehem
How still we see thee lie
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
The everlasting light
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee tonight

For Christ is born of Mary
And gathered all above
While mortals sleep, the angels keep
Their watch of wondering love

O morning stars together
Proclaim thy holy birth

And praises sing to God the King
And peace to men on earth

O little town of Bethlehem
How still we see thee lie
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
The everlasting light
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee tonight.”

The words by Rector Phillips Brooks (1835-93) and music by church organist Lewis H. Redner (1831-1908) resonated with the dreams - the hopes - of stillness and peace in the aftermath of the American Civil War.

Thanks to Jesus’s birth and life -and above all his resurrection, the fears evaporate and the hopes become adamantine.

For Micah, an eighth century prophet, you could say that hope was in short supply. The Neo-Assyrian army had conquered and deported most of Israel, the Northern Kingdom. It is thought that Micah, himself, had been an eyewitness to the destruction of Judah, the Southern Kingdom, in 701 bce., prompting him first to write oracles of doom. But after hearing God’s judgment, above the deep and dreamless sleep, Micah also heard God’s promise.

He wrote that out of the little town of Bethlehem, one of the smallest clans of Judah, a ruler whose origin was of old, would be born of a woman. The ruler would return the exiles and feed them on the strength of the Lord like a shepherd. Under the rule of the one of peace, they would dwell secure.

These hopes have not changed in almost three millennia. As it turned out, Micah was right about the fears and premature concerning the hopes of his time. Likewise, in the sixth century bce, exiles heard in Micah a word of hope spoken to them in Babylon - God’s promise of a ruler hailing from the least of the clans of Judah. They did return and even were permitted self-rule by the Persian Emperor Cyrus; but their hopes for one who would feed them in the strength of the Lord and secure their lives in peace were dashed by the corruption of their own politicians and priests. (Micah 5,2)

However, some two thousand years ago, it was – according to Matthew and Luke - in Bethlehem that the source and summit of our hope appeared on earth. That hope I celebrate at every mass I take. Thank God.

My hope is rooted in my faith in God’s love. All will - eventually - be well for me as, thanks to God’s goodness and my efforts, I hope to end up in paradise.

To live in hope is to be in harmony with God's will for me.
I used to say, "I'll see you "
Then "I'll see you, DV"
Nowadays, "it's in my diary."

Much research within the sport psychology field shows how our minds can lead to be detrimental on our performance. Instead of focusing on the negative aspects, such as worry, pessimism and fear, positive psychology, such as hope and optimism, can positively impact sporting performance.

Those who are hopeful - rather than throwing in the towel - have the willpower and determination to overcome obstacles which may be blocking the pathway of their individual goal.

For a pessimist/cynic, hope is deemed negative. “Hope is the most evil of evils because it prolongs man’s torment.” Claimed Friedrich Nietzsche(1844-1900) - an atheist/nihilist who concluded that there is no objective order or structure in the world except what we give it. Penetrating the façades buttressing convictions, the nihilist ‘discover’ that all values are baseless and that reason is impotent.

More uncertainty and less perceived control-hope sounds more akin to wishful thinking. Is it to say that hope is useless and harmful? While nihilists may agree, science shows that hope may indeed be helpful.

An interesting study looked at the impact of hope and optimism on social support. The research was conducted with about a hundred people who had been injured in terrorist attacks and their spouses. They found that the survivor’s hope was negatively associated with the spouse’s experience of PTSD, anxiety, and depression. But the spouse’s optimism had a negative association with the survivor’s trauma experiences. That is to say, the survivor’s hope benefited their spouse, but the spouse’s optimism benefited the survivor.

Why is that? “When spouses observe survivors as exhibiting hope, they may develop stronger faith in the ability of the survivors to deal with the consequences of the trauma, which in turn, may diminish their own symptoms. When survivors perceive their spouses as optimistic, the spouses may be conveying that things will eventually turn out well even if the current situation is extremely difficult.”

A hopeful survivor shows emotional strength despite the uncertainty and their lack of control on the situation, which is reassuring to the spouse. An optimistic spouse shows control and certainty in a better future, which is reassuring to the survivor. In contrast, a hopeful spouse would exhibit signs of uncertainty.

Hope is helpful in times of uncertainty. It’s what can keep us going when we don’t know what will happen and have little control over the outcome. But sometimes, hope can give us a false sense of reassurance and prevent us from taking matters in our hands. When you feel hopeful - uncertain but hoping something good will happen, ask yourself: is there anything I could do to make that outcome more likely? Is there any way I can gain more control?

It’s not always possible, and there are many matters where we are unfortunately powerless, just hoping for the best, but in some cases, it is possible to convert your hope into optimism.

Thomas Aquinas defines hope as ‘theological virtue by which man, relying on God's strength, seeks an arduous but possible good.’ In a fast-paced society aiming for immediate

gratification, for all too many folk, appreciation of the arduous or difficult good has fallen by the wayside.

Hope prefers future greatness to immediate pleasure.

Hope is the belief that your future will be better than the present and that you have the ability to make it happen. It involves both optimism and a can-do attitude. According to positive psychologist Charles Snyder's theory, hopeful thinking is made up of three key elements: Goals – Thinking in a goal-oriented way. Pathways – Finding different ways to achieve your goals. Agency – Believing that you can instigate change.

Hope is our belief that we can change the future for the better, or reach a desired goal. It is what keeps us moving forward when the going gets tough, and it helps us to "get back on the horse" when we fall off.

Reinhold Niebuhr (1892–1971) an American Reformed theologian, wrote the original version of the serenity prayer that reads: "O God and Heavenly Father, grant to us the serenity of mind to accept that which cannot be changed, courage to change that which can be changed, and wisdom to know the one from the other through Jesus Christ, our Lord," I would insert "so I can live in joyful hope and unrelenting drive, help God make this world a better place." Amen

"Once you choose hope, anything's possible," stated Christopher Reeve – who had starred in the film "Superman" and its three sequels. However, in 1995 he fell from a horse at an equestrian competition, leaving him paralyzed from the neck down. He was in a wheelchair and had to use a ventilator for the rest of his life. However, his hope enabled him to continue acting and directing, and write two autobiographical books. Nine years later, following an infection he died aged 52 in 2004 after suffering a heart attack. For me, and many others, his life was a declaration of hope.

"Hope is like the sun, which, as we journey toward it, casts the shadow of our burden behind us," said Samuel Smiles, (1812 – 1904) a British author and government reformer. Although he campaigned on a Chartist platform, he promoted the idea that more progress would come from new attitudes than from new laws. His primary work, "Self-Help" (1859), promoted thrift and claimed that poverty was caused largely by irresponsible habits, while also attacking materialism and *laissez-faire* government. It has been called "the bible of mid-Victorian liberalism" and had lasting effects on British political thought.

"Being deeply loved by someone gives you strength, while loving someone deeply gives you courage," admitted Lao Tzu, c. 500 BCE, also known as Laozi or Lao-Tze, a Chinese philosopher credited with founding the philosophical system of Taoism.

"Hope against Hope" by Nadezhda Mandelstam, is the most luminous account we have- or are likely to get - of the terror life in the Soviet Union during the 1930s purges. An inspiring story that relates determination to keep both love and art alive in the most desperate circumstances,

Barack Obama's 2006 book is called "The Audacity of Hope". A fine title. After all, hope does give us the courage, not only to dream, but to commit ourselves to achieving that dream.

Our Motivations are spread across a wide frontier, from ambition, curiosity - even vengeance and peace. Irrational instincts often keep us moving on.

The word ambition has given the concept negativity. The Latin word for this effort was *ambitio*, which came from *ambire*, a verb meaning "to go around." Since this activity was caused by a desire for honour or power, the word eventually came to mean "the desire for honour or power." This word came into French and English as ambition in the late Middle Ages.

A person's sense of ambition likely comes from their natural personality traits—such as conscientiousness and extraversion - along with influences in their environment.

Ambition stemming from individual goals, values, and aspirations. Jealousy/Envy: The desire for success fuelled by coveting others' achievements. Emotional and Intellectual Needs: Seeking accomplishment to satisfy emotional and intellectual desires.

If you're feeling unmotivated, you can bolster your ambitious spirit by practicing the following seven characteristics found in highly ambitious people:

1. Continuously planning and setting specific goals to promote focus
2. Staying motivated to achieve goals that help you self-actualize
3. Only feeling satisfied when you reach your ambitious goals
4. Competitively working alongside others, but for the sake of career growth and success
5. Willingly making changes in your life to better pursue your goals and purpose
6. Taking risks while maintaining critical thinking and emotional regulation
7. Remaining flexible and open-minded to strategically solve problems

Ambition is a strong desire to do or achieve something, typically requiring determination and hard work. Hope is a feeling of expectation and desire for a certain thing to happen, typically something positive and doable.

Hope underpins ambition and is its driving force. As in "My ambition is to win this tournament. I hope - I aim - I will."

To achieve an ambition, you need to focus on your aims where an aim is broad and general, while objectives are specific and focused. Aim is long-term and provides overall direction, while objectives are short-term and measurable. Aim focuses on the purpose and "why" of a project, while objectives emphasize the actions and "what" to accomplish.

Soon after my Eriskay Experience, I started to think about what I would like to achieve with my life. Give I was a BF - a Bloody Foreigner - I could not aim to do great things in politics or the army. So, I decided that I would aim for sanctity, helping God make this world more like He we would like it to be. Hence my application to Imperial College for a degree in Civil Engineering. My ambition was to live life to the full thanks to working for God. Then Opus

Dei entered my life and I ended up being ordained priest in 1969. God brought into my life a new way of working for Him.

So far, now that I am aged 85, I can say the ambition is being fulfilled.

I never aimed to be enriched by so many friends. But they came into my life. They were not my ambition but they came as a result of my aiming to help God. By them, my life has been enormously enriched. As Jesus said, "give and gifts will be yours" (Lk 6,38) And my life has proved the truth of these words.

I hope to help God make the world around me a better place. My ambition to help God has enriched my life wonderfully.

Back in 1989, my aim - my ambition - was my hope: setting up SPEC Centre . I hoped to have the means to attain my objectives that included not just recruiting and training the team with its leadership but the funds and equipment to make it able to fulfil its task: bringing young people closer to each other and to God - and developing their virtues to make a good fist of their lives. In "A Journey to Eternity, volume 3" you can discover how my hopes were fulfilled.

Personal, practical hope has three constituent elements: a goal, a pathway to that goal and the energy – the determination, the will-power, to keep on keeping on until that goal is reached.

Hence my achievements of YAP, WDP, SPEC, my three-part Biography and Life Squared – as well as my fortnightly pieces for The Universe Catholic Weekly. I Hope these ongoing endeavours will minimise the risk of dementia as I age. (Currently I am 85).

Hopeful people I have met – and there have been many - establish clear goals, imagine multiple workable pathways toward those goals, and persevere, even when obstacles get in their way.

Tactically, the opposite of hope is fear. "Given the traffic, I fear I will miss the train." Strategically it's despair. "I despair on how this government is tackling small boat immigration."

Hope is a demanding virtue, not a sunny disposition. It accepts reality, acknowledges obstacles and insists, as Barack Obama put it, "something better awaits us if we have the courage to reach for it and to work for it and to fight for it."

Hoping to lose weight is fine. However, unless you reduce your calorie intake and/or increase your exercise, your hopes will be frustrated.

To be great at your sport is admirable. However, unless you put in time and effort in training, your hopes will not be fulfilled. Arnold Palmer - one of the Golf-Greats - said, after a spectacular put, and a spectator had exclaimed "You lucky bugger", replied "the more I practise, the greater my luck."

If you, dear reader, hope to perform well on a stage, rehearse and rehearse until your role becomes a part of your muscle memory.

To hope is to see the bird in the egg, the butterfly in the caterpillar and the saint within the sinner. Hope works to reveal to everyone the beauty within their heart and to see their death as birth into divine eternity where they will meet the God, who on the cross, told the Repentant Thief, "today, you will be with me in Paradise"(Lk 23,43)

Love hopes for the best for their beloved.

Hope is like the River Jordan, while it moves it brings life. Once it stops, as in the Dead Sea, it is inert, in which nothing survives. Hope does not just stand and stare. Hope helps the tripped-up back onto their feet - and brushes them down.

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“I say to you today, my friends, that in spite of the difficulties and frustrations of the moment, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream. I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal." I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slaveowners will be able to sit down together at a table of brotherhood. I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a desert state, sweltering with the heat of injustice and oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice. I have a dream that my four children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.”

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr

From Under Milk Wood – for me, a poem rejoicing in hope.

“Every morning when I wake,
Dear Lord, a little prayer I make,
O please do keep Thy lovely eye
On all poor creatures born to die

And every evening at sun-down
I ask a blessing on the town,
For whether we last the night or no
I’m sure is always touch-and-go.

We are not wholly bad or good
Who live our lives under Milk Wood,
And Thou, I know, wilt be the first
To see our best side, not our worst.

O let us see another day!
Bless us all this night, I pray,
And to the sun we all will bow
And say, good-bye – but just for now!”

Dylan Thomas(1914-53)

4.Problems with hope

The Titanic, built by the Harland and Wolff shipbuilding company in Belfast, was designed by Thomas Andrews Jr., the chief naval architect of the shipyard, who died in the disaster. He hoped – he claimed – the ship was unsinkable. A fatal mistaken - Edwardian arrogance? – hope, for so many. Including himself

Insurance companies hope that their predictions are accurate. However, Lloyds found out in 1989-91, they can get these disastrously wrong. Huge asbestos and other pollutions cranked up losses of over £8 billion. 100 syndicates were forced to close.

Lloyds hoped the Titanic would sail safely for many years. However, within 30 days of its sinking in 1912, they paid out £1,000,000; some £148 million in today's currency.

Hope can be cruel. In the autumn of 1914, UK soldiers hoped they would be back home by that year’s Christmas.

Buoyed up by their Blitzkrieg successes as their tanks had swept through Holland, Belgium and France, Hitler and Goering hoped to crush the RAF and invade England. However, the UK - helped by 145 Poles, 88 Czechoslovaks, 29 Belgians, 13 Frenchmen and an Austrian pilot in the Battle of Britain shattered Hitler and Goering’s hopes – and gave them their first defeat in WW2.

Over optimistic – unreasonable – hope can be dangerous; even lethal – as was proved by Adolf Hitler’s hope to defeat Russia before winter set in.

In June 1941, though warned about the impending Nazi invasion, Stalin hoped they were wrong and did not accept the information as true. After all, the German Army had not been obtaining fur-coats and thus could not be attempting to invade the USSR with winter on its way.

The Axis forces in WW2 hoped to be victorious. However, delusional, they forgot that though the military may win battles, it is the factories that win wars. The production capacities of the USA once it got into gear – and the potential of the USSR once it focused on the war, showed – thank God – how absurd the dreams – the hopes - of Hitler, Mussolini and the Japanese government were.

Hope is typically considered to be a positive emotion. But new research provides evidence that hope can have negative financial consequences. The findings, published in the ‘Journal of Behavioural Decision Making’, indicate that more hopeful individuals have a greater tendency to hold on to losing stocks.

Folk suffering from depression or bi-polar disorders, find that hope is – seems to be - beyond their reach. Engaging with these strategies does seem to help,

1. Avoid drugs and alcohol. ...
2. Watch for early warning signs. ...
3. Involve friends and family. ...
4. Engage in a purpose. ...
5. Manage stress and recharge. ...
6. Keep a sleep schedule. ...
7. Take your medications exactly as directed.

Hope may return.

Over my 54 years of priesthood, I have come across all too many people who spent too much of their income on lottery tickets – and other forms of gambling – in the hope of become seriously wealthy.

It is not easy to live with hope when you or your friends are diagnosed with Alzheimer's, dementia, Parkinson's, cancer, or even a serious, incurable stroke. The best one can do is to hope the problem will not be too painful - or last too long. Hoping for entry into heaven soon is not unethical.

Folk who are God-blind and unable to realise the close, intimate love that is there - and if their friends, including their family, are not close or caring, can feel isolated, lonely and thus lose hope. In an urban, everyone-for-themselves-alone society, when folk suffer anxiety, alcohol and/or drug problems, bereavement, bi-polar disorders, divorce illness - mental illness above all, as well as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), redundancy or early enforced retirement, hopelessness can creep into many hearts. Thank God, The Samaritans are there to help. They have helped so many to crawl out from despair back into hope.

If by listening they can allow their interlocutor to feel attachment, intimacy and emotional bonding, a hope of productivity and accomplishments they may experience hope for overcoming their challenges - and build up their resilience.

Having hope isn't always easy. Today, we are bombarded with news and images of wars, violent crime, illness, natural disasters, and economic hardships. Some might say it's naïve or impossible to find hope under these circumstances. Watching Wimbledon this year I heard, "he is keeping hope alive" when, a couple of sets down, a player won two consecutive games. In the event he lost – but kept on fighting.

Hope does not mean everything is okay right now, but it makes things less difficult to face because, with hope, there is optimism and belief that things will be better.

One of the slogans underpinning my life's philosophy is the old "Hope for best, be prepared for the worst." Murphy's law, "an observation that anything that can go wrong will go wrong," is a familiar: often seen and well known.

Worst? Smoke detectors and fire alarms, as well as lots of various types of fire extinguishers, have prevented many fires - and reduced the number of fire stations required.

The loss of hope among so many young people in the 60s increased the use of sex, drugs and rock'n'roll to fill the despairing void in so many hearts.

Hoping to do good does not mean you succeed.

Everyone on a journey hopes to reach their destination – as did the crew and passengers on The Titanic. We know how these hopes foundered in an iceberg.

When people marry they hope to keep their promises of life together' until it ends' However, almost a half end in separation and/or divorce.

Criminals hope they will not get caught. I have heard that Russians like to think they are not criminals until/unless they are caught.

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"When one door closes another door opens; but we so often look so long and so regretfully upon the closed door, that we do not see the ones which open for us." stated Alexander Graham Bell(1847-1922)

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A group of young people is walking along a white, frozen countryside.

As they pass through a kissing gate, they spot a frozen bird sitting on that gate.

One of them picks it up and, using the heel of their boot, scrapes a hole in a pile of newly bestowed cow dung, placing the bird therein.

The warmth of that dung unfreezes the bird and as it warms up, it starts to sing.

A fox passing by hears that song, comes over, picks that bird up, and kills it.

The moral of the story is that not everybody who puts you in it is an enemy. Not everyone who takes you out is a friend. And if you are in it, stay schtum. I try. Boastful hope can attract destructive attention.

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When I was a teacher, I encouraged pupils to revise the whole of the syllabus rather than hope the questions will be there on the fragment of the syllabus they revised.

When the weather forecast is uncertain, Hope takes an umbrella – which, often, seems to scare the rainclouds away. Hope means checking I have the keys I need. It means having the telephone number of the RAC when I am driving. It means looking at the sell-by date on potentially dangerous foods. A senior prelate, a friend of mine, ended up very sick in Lourdes as the night before he left, to clear out his fridge, he ate some rather aged mushrooms.

When younger, I imagined – I hoped – charming people would be friends. However, though friends may be charming, life has taught me the painful lesson that not all charming folk are fiends. For some, charm is useful currency to obtain what is desired.

God, being infinite, can give his total attention to each one of us. All too many people forget this fact – as shown in this joke.

Just after the end of WW2, in a church in Naples, two men are praying aloud.
A dapper-dressed man, prays. “God, please give me \$50,000 so I can save my business.”
A shabby- dressed man, prays “Dear father, please let me have \$20 so I can feed my family.”
The rich, turns to him, and says “Here, take your \$20 and piss off. Don’t distract God.”
The poor man’s hope was fulfilled. Fast.

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A poem and a song encouraging – or is it celebrating?- Hope.

“And did those feet in ancient time,
Walk upon England’s mountains green:
And was the holy Lamb of God,
On England’s pleasant pastures seen!

And did the Countenance Divine,
Shine forth upon our clouded hills?
And was Jerusalem builded here,
Among these^[c] dark Satanic Mills?

Bring me my Bow of burning gold:
Bring me my Arrows of desire:
Bring me my Spear: O clouds unfold:
Bring me my Chariot of fire!

I will not cease from Mental Fight,
Nor shall my Sword sleep in my hand:

Till we have built Jerusalem,
In England's green & pleasant Land.
William Blake(1757-1827)

5. Sustaining and developing hope.

Living – being - in hope is fine, but it is more important to live – to act – in hope. I write this document hoping it will help a reader or three to live a more delightful life.

Courting couple hope their partner will say ‘yes’ when asked ‘will you marry me?’

We cannot develop the virtue of hope merely by applying an abstract formula, listening to a lecture, or reading a book. We must learn, in part, through experience - by reflecting on times when hope empowered us to achieve a difficult good or when presumption or despair prevented us from realizing our goals.

For success in sport, hope needs a spouse, commitment - of the athlete as well as his or her family. Together they can win and keep on winning.

Let's take just one case, Max Whitlock.

Max Antony Whitlock OBE (born 13 January 1993) a British artistic gymnast with fourteen medals and six titles in Olympic and World Championships. Whitlock is the most successful gymnast in British history. He is also the most successful pommel horse worker in Olympic Games history, with two gold medals and one bronze.

He became Great Britain's first-ever Olympic gold medalist in artistic gymnastics when he won both the floor exercise and pommel horse at the 2016 Summer Olympics. He is a four-time European champion and a four-time Commonwealth Games champion representing England.

Aged just nine, Whitlock made the GB squad and was doing 15 hours training a week. Aged ten that rose to 20 hours a week in the gym and became 35 hours a week during his teenage years.

“My school was hugely supportive. My mum would pick me up around noon and we'd drive to the gym, an hour away. I'd train from 1pm until 8pm and she would wait the whole time. I feel extremely lucky for the commitment from my mum and my dad, too – he was working all hours to help with the cost of everything.”

People ask how I've stayed committed, training 35 hours a week, six days a week for so many years – and how did everyone around me stay so committed to enable me to do that?”

In 2024, Whitlock explains that now he's considered an ‘older athlete – seven years past his peak age – so, different from the 35 hours he used to rack up in the gym, now, it's four days a week, four hours maximum, focusing on building his routine, stamina and fitness. When he is not in the gym, he's doing everything he can to recover for his next session – which explains the hot tub in his garden.

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The Olympic Games.

The modern Olympics were the brainchild of Baron Pierre de Coubertin (1863 -1937), a Hellenophile French educator and historian who, as a child had experienced the Franco Prussian war of 1870, had a strong belief in the power of sport to form character and to promote peace between nations. He was greatly inspired by the sporting theme in Thomas Hughes's 1857 novel Tom Brown's School Days, and by the Much Wenlock Games, which he visited in 1890.

De Coubertin's hope was to establish a broadly-based social movement which, through the medium of sport, would celebrate physical culture and art, promote international understanding, and inspire people to reach higher and farther while growing stronger in mind and body. He hoped that sport could become an antidote to war.

In 1892, de Coubertin proposed reviving the Olympics in Paris, initially with little success. But his efforts led to the formation of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in 1894, and to the first modern Games, in Athens in 1896.

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A story of hope in action.

Francis Xavier Van Thuan(born 1928), the Archbishop of Saigon, now known as Ho Chi Minh City, endured thirteen years of imprisonment in North Vietnam, nine of which were spent in solitary confinement. During his captivity, a copy of the New Testament was covertly smuggled into the prison for the Catholic inmates. To share God's word among themselves, the prisoners tore the New Testament into small sections, which were then distributed.

Each prisoner committed their piece to memory. At sunset, they would take turns reciting aloud the passage they had memorised.

Recorded on the Feast of the Holy Rosary, 7 October 1976, in Phú Khánh prison, during his solitary confinement he stated, "I am happy here, in this cell, where white mushrooms are growing on my sleeping mat, because You are here with me, because You want me to live here with You. I have spoken much in my lifetime: now I speak no more. It's Your turn to speak to me, Jesus; I am listening to You".

After his release, Archbishop Van Thuan reflected on how profoundly moving it was to hear the Word of God recited with such deep faith in the midst of silence and darkness. He remarked that in those moments, the presence of God in his Word was undeniably felt.

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I remember, years ago, reading that to increase your hope about the future it is good to write down three positive things - no matter how small or great - that happened to you that day.

Self-confidence improves if you get enough sleep, watch your diet-cutting out recreational drugs and lots of alcohol - take exercise, pray and meditate and keep in close touch with positive thinking friends and allies in life.

If you have lost a loved one - or your job, had a major illness or a financial crisis, your hope can be sapped.

However, your hope can grow if you take 90 second pauses, breathe mindfully, spend time in nature and with god friends - including God in prayer.

The Mass is the sublime expression of hope.

It starts off with, 'The Lord be with you'. Because He is, all will be well.

You were sent to heal the contrite of heart. Broken hearted will be saved.

You came to call sinners - thus we are invited to live with God

you are seated at the right hand of the Father to intercede for us. With God on our side, we can - we should - live in hope.

Christ, and The Lord has mercy.

In the Gloria, we say that Jesus Christ takes away the sins of the world. The Gospel - the Good news- is our hope.

The creed reminds us that Jesus came down on earth for our salvation- and, as long as we accept that initiative, we shall be saved and have eternal life once, at death, we are born into divine eternity. I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come.

Our bread will become the bread of life, the wine our spiritual drink.

Jesus Christ's body and blood have been given up for us.

By your cross and resurrection, you have set us free.

The Lamb of God takes away our sins and grants us that peace. The concept 'hope' appears eight times after the Our father at Mass; seven times in the word 'peace'. Peace - shalom - is my hope. The word Shalom encapsulates not just lack of struggle or war but unity, joy, health, wholeness, prosperity and safety.

What uplifting hope!

Alleluia! So, we can go in peace, glorifying the Lord with our lives.

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If hope is like a cross country all weathers vehicle, its drive comes from the rechargeable battery called determination. This can be - and needs to be - recharged regularly with prayer, sacraments spiritual reading and community support. Pride and a desire to leave a mark in space-time before my birth into divine eternity at death also helps we to keep on keeping on.

To entertain you, dear reader, I have copied in a piece I wrote on 'Determination' for the Universe Catholic Weekly, 5.7.24

“Hilary Hinton "Zig" Ziglar (1926-2012), an American author, salesman, and motivational speaker made it clear that “I believe success is achieved by ordinary people with extraordinary determination and that you were born to win, but to be a winner you must plan to win, prepare to win, and expect to win.”

Determination calls for motivation, the drive behind the effort and accomplishments across those PIES – the Physical, Intellectual, Emotional and Spiritual dimensions of our life. Without the determination to improve, all of the other mental factors - confidence, intensity, focus, and emotions - are meaningless. I don't know about you, dear reader, but consciously I work on developing my virtues because I know that unconsciously they shape my life.

Douglas “ Doug” Clayton Durdle, English retired professional wrestler, said “Never give up, never give in, and when the upper hand is ours, may we have the ability to handle the win with the dignity that we absorbed the loss.”

“Persistence can change failure into extraordinary achievement,” stated Matt Biondi (born 1965), an American swimmer and former world record-holder in five events, who competed in the Summer Olympic Games in 1984, 1988 and 1992, winning a total of eleven medals.

Abby Wambach (Born 1980), a six-time winner of the U.S. Soccer Athlete of the Year award, a regular on the U.S. women's national soccer team from 2003 to 2015, reminded us that, “you must not only have competitiveness but ability, regardless of the circumstance you face, to never quit.”

I am happy to admit that – before taking my morning shower – I use the vices of pride and vanity to fend off temptations to sloth and cowardice from the lower Vlad who whispers “why bother with these 86 (I am 85 years breathing, plus nine months in my mother's womb) push-ups or full-squats? You deserve a rest – and you're getting older!” Like Churchill, a Tory and Stalin, a communist, linked up against Hitler, my enemy's enemy becomes my ally.

“Set your goals high, and don't stop till you get there,” encouraged Vincent Edward "Bo" Jackson, American former professional baseball and football player. He is the only professional athlete in history to be named an All-Star in both baseball and American football.

Thomas Charles Lasorda – currently aged 93 - American former Major League Baseball pitcher, coach, and manager, best known for his two decades managing the Los Angeles Dodgers. made it clear that, “the difference between the impossible and the possible lies in a person's determination.”

I keep working on the physical not only to show I appreciate God's gift of my body, but also to stay fit, flexible, avoid obesity and – hopefully/prayerfully - do not end up in a wheelchair before its time. How about you dear reader?

I used to work on my intellect to pass exams and accrue qualifications. Now I keep studying not only to kick dementia down the road but to stay ahead of the accelerating curve of knowledge all around.

To sustain my Spirituality – with its motivational power – I strive to keep an eye on the divine presence in everything and silently discuss with *Yesh* what I see and hear. Ever since I

passed those first four-score years of life, this prayer-dialogue has replaced many of my needs of 'saying prayers'.

From her own life experiences, Billie Jean King (born 1943), who won 39 Grand Slam titles: 12 in singles, 16 in women's doubles, and 11 in mixed doubles, could say that "champions keep playing until they get it right."

Theodore "Ted" Samuel Williams (1918-2002), an American professional baseball player and manager who played his entire 19-year Major League Baseball career for the Boston Red Sox from 1939 to 1960. (His career was interrupted by military service during World War II and the Korean War) knew what he has talking about when he said, "just keep going. Everybody gets better if they keep at it."

Alexandra "Alex" Morgan Carrasco (born 1989), American professional soccer player who co-captained the United States with Carli Lloyd and Megan Rapinoe from 2018 to 2020 encouraged folk to, "always work hard, never give up, and fight until the end because it's never really over until the whistle blows."

Remember, you are captain of your ship. If you accept that your will-power is inadequate for the task, you might benefit from a personal trainer or Pilates classes - if you can afford them. If not, you might just need the help of a friend, a partner at your gym. To get my engineering degree, I teamed up with Doug. Mutually, we shamed each other into studying together the hours we had set ourselves. It worked.

Larry Joe Bird (born 1956), American former professional basketball player, coach and executive in the National Basketball Association, widely regarded as one of the greatest basketball players of all time encouraged us to "Push yourself again and again. Don't give an inch until the final buzzer sounds."

Muhammad Ali - who needs no introduction – admitted, "I hated every minute of training, but I said, 'Don't quit. Suffer now and live the rest of your life as a champion.'"

When at the offertory at mass I say, "fruit of the earth and work of human hands" though I accept I cannot change my DNA, I know it is up to me how I shape my life: how I respond whatever life throws at me. When Covid came onto the UK scene, I was determined to put it to good use. 'Staying at home' not only 'saved lives', it gave me the opportunity to write – and finish – not only 'my masterpiece', "Life Squared - a handbook for life in an accelerating world" - but the 3rd volume of my memoirs, "A Journey to Eternity - 3".

Joseph "Broadway Joe" William Namath (born 1943), quarterback in the American Football League and National Football League during the 1960s and 1970s, posed a good question, "If you aren't going all the way, why go at all?"

If you have a competitive character, use it as a motivator. Compete - if not against your friends – yourself. Aim to improve your PB, your Personal Best across those PIES of yours: the physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual dimensions of your life.

My hopes for my PIES can be summed up as

P, to stay as fit as possible for as long as possible – thanks to my exercise routine, diet and adequate sleep.

I, to keep on studying, writing and learning from life.

E, to remain open to God’s love for me and export it to me friends – which include my family – my allies-in-life and those with whom I pastorally work. Being a friend to my friends I hope to keep them as I journey on the eternity.

S, to keep in close contact with *Yesh*, keep on improving my virtues and living in ever deeper hope.

How about you, dear reader? What do you hope to achieve in and through your life? To hope for a better future, you need to learn from your past.

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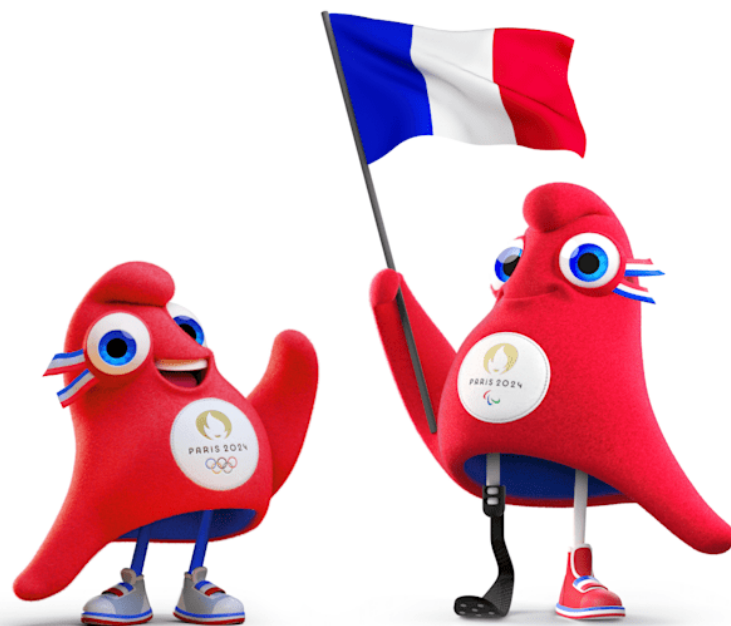
James “Jimmy V” Thomas Anthony Valvano (1946-92), an American college basketball player, coach, and broadcaster – with an excellent coaching career with multiple schools - knew what he was talking about when he said, “Never give up! Failure and rejection are only the first step to succeeding.”

What would you, dear reader, like to have on your grave’s headstone? In my will – though I plan to be cremated and the stone will be small and horizontal - I have asked to have just “He kept trying” placed below my name and dates. It might encourage people passing by to also try and live in hope.

The targets of your determination need to be realistic. I don’t know about you, but – until that stone - I am determined to age as gracefully as is possible. I keep on keeping on.

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Every celebration of The Games – this 2024 year in Paris – hopes to achieve a goal, to make a difference. Paris decided to make their hope visual with



They are the mascots of the Paris 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Game. Instead of the animal mascots of previous Games, they do not represent animals, but Phrygian caps!

These two red mascots - called the Phryges - symbolise freedom and revolution and will accompany the public to the Paris 2024 Games. The two Phryges, one Olympic and the other Paralympic, with different but complementary characters, have a common mission: to encourage and embody sport in a French and inclusive spirit.

The Phrygian or liberty cap is a soft conical cap with the apex bent over, associated in antiquity with several peoples in Eastern Europe, Anatolia and Asia, including the Persians, the **Medes** and the Scythians, as well as in the Balkans, Dacia, Thrace and in Phrygia, where the name originated.

The oldest depiction of the Phrygian cap is from Persepolis in Iran. Although Phrygian caps did not originally function as liberty caps, they came to signify freedom and the pursuit of liberty first in the American Revolution and then in the French Revolution, particularly as a symbol of Jacobinism(*) - in which context it has been also called a Jacobin cap.

With the Phryges of Paris 2024, the organisers hope that the revolution through sport is underway!

What do you, dear reader reckon? Will it?

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In the upcoming USA presidential election, the Kamala Harris effect on the polls has been dramatic. Early August, 2024 surveys point to a tightening race. Democrats are once again hoping they might prevent Trump returning to the White House.

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Hope does not mean everything is okay right now, but it makes things less difficult to face because, with hope, there is optimism and belief that things will be better.

The 21-year-old Spanish tennis champion Carlos Alcaraz plays audaciously even under pressure, but he admits that before Wimbledon final in 2023 he was shaking so much he had to lie down on a physio table for half an hour "to calm myself and my muscles". Once on court, hope turns to "Go for it. If you miss it, you miss it. Don't hold back. Don't regret. Play positive. Go aggressively." "If I hadn't lost the matches I lost in 2022, I would never have achieved what I achieved. I learnt from every defeat. You have to learn from the moments you live."

Following his win at the 2022 US Open, Alcaraz became the youngest man and the first male teenager in the Open Era to top the singles rankings, at 19 years, 4 months, and 6 days old.

(*) The Jacobin movement encouraged sentiments of patriotism and liberty amongst the populace. The movement's contemporaries, such as the King Louis XVI, located the effectiveness of the revolutionary movement not "in the force and 1789 bayonets of soldiers, guns, cannons and shells but by the marks of political power".

Another tenet of Jacobinism is a secularism that includes the elimination of existing religions in favor of one run by the state (i.e., the cults of Reason and the Supreme Being).

Jacobinism was as an ideology thus developed and implemented during the French Revolution of 1789.

Gratitude to God and a positive mind set has given me my - hope and resilience. (See Volume 2 & 3 of my "A Journey to Infinity")

Hope will help you enjoy life and better handle stress, protecting you from depression, anxiety and despair.

Build strong and healthy relationships with friends - including family - and allies-in-life.

Make every day positively meaningful.

Never feel a victim.

I See challenges rather than problems.

Look after yourself, with enough sleep, good nutrition and adequate exercise.

Then you can adapt to misfortunes across your PIES and SON.

Resilience - especially when rooted in prayer and a close relationship with Jesus Christ - does not evaporate challenges but helps you enjoy life, and better handle stresses

Hope needs to be realistic in its aims, objectives and means – including the gathering allies in life.

It needs a positive mindset. An attitude of "never let the buggers grind you down."

Fall down? Pick yourself up and move on.

See the past as the rehearsal for, not a brake on, now.

In Lk 11, 9-13 we read that Jesus said, "I tell you: ask, and you shall receive; seek, and you shall find; knock, and the door shall be opened to you. For everyone who asks, receives; and everyone who seeks, finds; and to everyone who knocks the door will be opened."

Prayer of petition needs to be modulated. As we read in Lk22,42, "Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done."

Hope – and prayer are all well and good. However, we have to help God make our dreams come true. A story I use is Janek, praying desperately, "please God, to save my family, I need to win the National lottery! "God replies, " To give me a chance, please, Janek; buy yourself a lottery ticket."

All I can do, is to do all I can. I try to do my best and then relaxed, I leave the rest to God.

I have used the mythical story of a singlehanded, transatlantic, fundamentalist Christian sailor to help folk see that hope needs to include the instruments God uses to help us.

Halfway across the Atlantic, an early morning, sudden storm turns his boat over. He climbs up onto its keel. "No problem. God will save me."

Mid-morning, a liner approaches and slows down. "Can we help you sir?" Comes a call from a loudspeaker. " Thank you. But no need. God will save me."

After noon, a super tanker approaches. Same conversation.

At dusk, a frigate comes close. Same conversation.

Midnight, out friend dies of hypothermia.

At the gates of heaven, he meets God. "You betrayed me. I believed in you." He speaks to God.

"But, my dear," replies God. " I sent you a liner, a super tanker, and a frigate. What more could I have done?"

Our sailor, perhaps undervaluing the material world ignored the incarnation – God’s presence in Space-Time. God is present in the presents he sends us, and these include our friends, family, and allies in life.

I hope to stay healthy. Hence my daily exercises routine – including walking rather than taking short bus trips and climbing up to four flights of stairs rather than taking a lift - diet, adequate sleep, study and writing - and prayer.

I hope to avoid accidents, so I drive carefully with a car in good shape.

I have found that my relationship with *Yesh*, as well as my exercise routine (which you can find on my website “fathervlad.com”) and the lovely company of friends I have, helps me to stay hopeful and, indeed, delight in the joy of life.

To God, I frequently express my gratitude for so many gifts I have received – including, so far, a life from serious health issues. Gratitude sustains and enhances hope! Remembering the goodness’s in the past, makes it easier to dream about goodness’s in the future.

“Gratitude makes sense of our past, brings peace for today, and creates a vision for tomorrow.” Wrote Melody Beattie(born 1948), an American author of self-help books on co-dependent relationships.

Henri Frederic Amiel (1821-1881), a Swiss moral philosopher, poet, and critic, made it clear that “Thankfulness is the beginning of gratitude. Gratitude is the completion of thankfulness. Thankfulness may consist merely of words. Gratitude is shown in acts.”

“Joy is the simplest form of gratitude.” declared Karl Barth (1886-1968) a Swiss Reformed theologian.

Being hopeful makes you an optimist, which the is defined as someone who “anticipates positive outcomes, whether serendipitously or through perseverance and effort, and who is confident of attaining desired goals.”

We all exist somewhere on the spectrum of pessimist to optimist, and very few of us are full-on, forever only glass-half-full people. It's completely normal to have trouble being optimistic, even in the best of circumstances. But now it's even more of a challenge. So why bother trying to be hopeful when things are so overwhelmingly bad?

Cultivating hope and resilience can be key to managing the symptoms of mental illnesses, such as depression or anxiety. A persistent feeling of hopelessness is often a defining symptom of depression. Fear is one of the driving factors of anxiety.

Putting in the work to be hopeful builds resilience.

Some people are just naturally optimistic. However, resilience is something that's learned - first through our childhood experiences and then as we go through the inevitable challenges of life.

For instance, if you lost your job but you're passionate about a certain cause perhaps climate change - you might discover hope by donating time and effort to those issues while you figure out what your next job might be.

Try to keep some semblance of a self-care routine. Cultivating hope starts with being able to authentically identify how you're feeling in a particular moment, identifying how you would rather be feeling, and building or drawing on the tools in your life to help you feel that way.

I remember coming across the ABCDE model often used in cognitive behavioural therapy, where the A stands for *adversity*, naming the challenge or problem you're up against. The B draws your attention to the negative *belief* you have about the situation. The C focuses on the *consequences* that belief is having on your behaviour and how you feel about yourself. In D, you start to *dispute* those beliefs and offer alternate explanations to yourself. Finally, E stands for *energise*: a new way of thinking about the original event or challenge.

This is an idea that has real research behind it, such as this 2019 study published in the journal *Development and Psychopathology*. For the study, researchers randomly assigned 23 women to take part in a support group that met 12 times over a few months using video conferencing software. Results showed that many of the participants found the groups incredibly valuable for building authentic connections and dedicating time to focus on their emotional well-being — even though the groups were virtual.

Gratitude for help received bolsters hope. “With the help of others, I can achieve so much more.”

Alfred North Whitehead OM FRS FBA (1861-1947), was an English mathematician and philosopher. He created the philosophical school known as process philosophy, which has been applied in a wide variety of disciplines, including ecology, theology, education, physics, biology, economics, and psychology. He reminded us that “No one who achieves success does so without the help of others. The wise and confident acknowledge this help with gratitude.”

Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-1945, killed in Flossenbürg concentration camp, Germany), German Lutheran pastor, theologian and anti-Nazi dissident who was a key founding member of the Confessing Church, stated that “In ordinary life, we hardly realize that we receive a

great deal more than we give, and that it is only with gratitude that life becomes rich” and “I’ve had a remarkable life. I seem to be in such good places at the right time. You know, if you were to ask me to sum my life up in one word, gratitude.”

Marcus Tullius Cicero (106-43 bce), poet, philosopher, rhetorician, and humourist, taught us that “ Gratitude is not only the greatest of virtues but the parent of all others.”

Ralph Waldo Emerson(1803-82), an American essayist, lecturer, philosopher, abolitionist, and poet who led the Transcendentalist movement of the mid-19th century warned us that, “You cannot do a kindness too soon because you never know how soon it will be too late.”

Mary Davis (born 1954), Irish social entrepreneur, activist and long-term campaigner for the rights and inclusion of children and adults with intellectual disabilities – CEO of Special Olympics International since May 2016 admitted that “The more grateful I am, the more beauty I see.”

Rabbi Harold Kushner (1935-2023), American author, and lecturer; a member of the Rabbinical Assembly of Conservative Judaism reminded us that “if you concentrate on finding whatever is good in every situation, you will discover that your life will suddenly be filled with gratitude, a feeling that nurtures the soul.”

John F. Kennedy (1917-63), 35th - and youngest ever - president of the United States from 1961 until his assassination in 1963 made it clear that, “as we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them.”

“Feeling gratitude and not expressing it is like wrapping a present and not giving it.” – William Arthur Ward, (1921-94) American motivational writer.

G.K. Chesterton (1874-1936) English author, philosopher, Christian apologist, and literary and art critic, admitted that, “when it comes to life the critical thing is whether you take things for granted or take them with gratitude.”

Mark Zuckerberg (born 1984) Co-founder, chairman and CEO of Meta Platforms (formerly Facebook, Inc.) Co-founder and co-CEO of Chan Zuckerberg Initiative, made it clear that life had taught him that, “optimists tend to be successful and pessimists tend to be right.”

In times like before the Peace of Westphalia (1648, POW), which established a new political order that is now known as Westphalian sovereignty, the European wars of religion during the 16th, 17th and early 18th centuries, fought after the Protestant Reformation began in 1517, disrupted the religious and political order in the Catholic countries of Europe.

By the end of the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648) - which resulted in a death toll of approximately 8 million) - many felt it impossible to maintain any sense of hope or optimism about the future. However, with peace came prosperity and eventually hope returned.

When I look at the news and see how grim the world appears, I remind myself of how years ago, when still a teacher and chaplain at the Cardinal Vaughan Memoria School, I took a minibus of boys to Snowdonia. Having climbed a peak, we could see our minibus down in the valley. Suddenly a cloud rolled in. We could not see further than our feet. However, as

time was pressing and it was getting cold, we started down the path we could just see - towards the minibus that had disappeared. It had been there. It was still there. So, we got there. No problem. End of story.

When much younger I hoped I could trust HMG. Then came the Royal Mail conspiracy, Contaminated blood from the USA, the Grenfell disaster - and its ubiquitous dangerous cladding and the way Downing Street reacted to Covid - turned my attention to things I could influence and these sustained my hope.

My life has had – and still has - its seasons. It's Spring, up to the age of 26, summer, up to 56, autumn, up to 76, and winter up to our death and birth into divine eternity. Hope has its colour in each. Spring is bright and fresh with poppy reds and fresh greens. Summer is cool and soft, with icy blues and soft purples. Autumn colours are burnt oranges and rustic reds. And winter has deep jewel tones like sapphire, emerald, and ruby red.

The Father gives me my being. I am. I believe. Faith
The Son gives me knowing. I know I am beloved. Charity
The Holy Spirit enables me to want. I hope. I have Hope
Ask yourself, dear reader, 'how - and whose hope – may I help to improve?'
A joke on hope - from Communist Russia.

It's Mosco. A policeman sees a Jew holding a Hebrew dictionary.
“Why are you learning Hebrew? You know you cannot leave.”
“I am learning Hebrew so that I can talk to Moses and Abraham when I get to heaven.”
“And if you go to hell?”
“I already speak Russian.”

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To end this section, a poem imbued with hope.

“All that is gold does not glitter,
Not all those who wander are lost
The old that is strong does not wither,
Deep roots are not reached by the frost.
From the ashes a fire shall be woken,
A light from the shadows shall spring;
Renewed shall be blade that was broken,
The crownless again shall be king.”

J.R.R Tolkien (1892-1973)

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Teaching children hope.

Parents – and teachers – who know how powerfully-positively hope shapes lives, will do their best to teach children the virtue – the skill – of hope.

They will praise children when smaller goals are reached and encourage children to not give up when obstacles occur. Discussing the future, working on small goals, and being supportive can help children nurture hope. This hope is a powerful tool for building a brighter future.

They will embrace Positivity: Encouraging their children to focus on the bright side of situations. They will help them see the potential for growth in every experience. They will teach Problem-Solving: Show them how to approach problems with a hopeful mindset. They will discuss solutions and alternatives, emphasizing that challenges can be opportunities.

Whether it's through books, movies, or songs, sharing tales about overcoming adversity will inspire children to believe that anything is possible if they just keep trying and never give up on their dreams!

They will develop imagination by tapping into a child's love of playing, pretending and reading. Children's stories are filled with characters who must overcome challenges or solve dilemmas to reach their goals in imaginative ways. Why not ask the children to imagine themselves in these heroes' shoes?

To sum up, here are six points that can help anyone teach children about hope

1. Encourage their dreams: Ask the children about their dreams and goals. Listen, support, and help them break these dreams into achievable steps. Model hopeful Behaviour: Be a positive role model. Show them how you maintain hope in the face of challenges and setbacks.(remember Frederick Nietzsche's "I might believe in the Redeemer if his followers looked more redeemed."?)
2. Celebrate achievements: Recognize and celebrate even small accomplishments. This reinforces the idea that effort leads to success.
3. Read hopeful stories: share books and stories that highlight hope, resilience, and overcoming adversity.
4. Embrace positivity: encourage each child to focus on the bright side of situations.
5. Help them see the potential for growth in every experience.
6. Teach problem-solving: Show them how to approach problems with a hopeful mindset. Discuss solutions and alternatives, emphasizing that challenges can be opportunities.

Drum into their young minds that they can always hope to fulfil their potential. They need not compete against anyone else. Just themselves, their lower self.

Hope of Gender Equality

Ever since reading that Jesus had said, "what you do to the least of mine, you do unto me," close friends of Jesus dreamt of – hoped for – racial and gender equality. These took centuries gradually to come into practical life. In all too many Muslim countries – chief among these is Taliban Afghanistan, gender equality is just a female dream.

The movement begins.

Lucy Stone (1818-1893) hoped for -was an early advocate of- antislavery and women's rights. She was born in Massachusetts. After she graduated from Oberlin College in 1847, she began lecturing for the antislavery movement as a paid agent for the American Anti-Slavery Society.

In 1848, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott organized the first convention regarding women's rights in the United States. Called the Seneca Falls Convention, the event in Seneca Falls, New York, drew over 300 people, mostly women.

Emmeline Pankhurst(1858-1928)

The Pankhurst family is closely associated with the militant campaign for the vote. In 1903 Emmeline Pankhurst and others, frustrated by the lack of progress, decided more direct action was required and founded the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU) with the motto 'Deeds not words'.

Women were enfranchised in the UK in 1918 and, on an equal level with men, in 1928. Switzerland was the last European country to give women the vote in 1971. Legal equality was not established in most Western democracies until the 1960s and 1970s, e.g. the facilitation and fairer treatment of women in divorce.

Hoping to abolish Slavery – long, hopeful journey, not yet completed.

In 1315, Louis X, king of France, published a decree proclaiming that "France signifies freedom" and that any slave setting foot on French soil should be freed. This prompted subsequent governments to circumscribe slavery in the overseas colonies.

In 1824, Elizabeth Heyrick, a Leicester Quaker, published 'Immediate, Not Gradual Abolition', which proposed the immediate emancipation of slaves in the British colonies rather than the gradual abolition suggested by the Anti-Slavery Society

Slavery Abolition Act, (1833), in British history, act of Parliament that abolished slavery in most British colonies, freeing more than 800,000 enslaved Africans in the Caribbean and South Africa as well as a small number in Canada. It received Royal Assent on August 28, 1833, and took effect on August 1, 1834.

After centuries of struggle, slavery was eventually declared illegal at the global level in 1948 under the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights. By this time, the Arab world was the only region in the world where chattel slavery was still legal. Slavery in Saudi Arabia, slavery in Yemen and slavery in Dubai was abolished in 1960s, with slavery in Oman following in 1970. Mauritania was the last country to officially abolish slavery, with a presidential decree in 1981. Today, child and adult slavery and forced labour are illegal in almost all countries, as well as being against international law, but human trafficking for labour and for sexual bondage continues to affect tens of millions of adults and children.

Signed into law, on July 2, 1964, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 outlawed segregation in businesses such as theatres, restaurants, and hotels. It banned discriminatory practices in employment and ended segregation in public places such as swimming pools, libraries, and public schools.

When did equality start in America? The Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), originally passed by Congress in 1972 with a deadline for ratification by March 1979, gained much support from women and men who felt social change could be garnered through legislation.

Civil rights movement was an organized effort by Black Americans to end racial discrimination and gain equal rights under the law. It began in the late 1940s and ended in the

late 1960s. Although tumultuous at times, the movement was mostly nonviolent and resulted in laws to protect every American's constitutional rights, regardless of color, race, sex or national origin.

July 26, 1948: President Harry Truman issues Executive Order 9981 to end segregation in the Armed Services.

May 17, 1954: *Brown v. Board of Education*, a consolidation of five cases into one, is decided by the Supreme Court, effectively ending racial segregation in public schools. Many schools, however, remained segregated.

August 28, 1955: Emmett Till, a 14-year-old from Chicago is brutally murdered in Mississippi for allegedly flirting with a white woman. His murderers are acquitted, and the case bring international attention to the civil rights movement after *Jet* magazine publishes a photo of Till's beaten body at his open-casket funeral.

December 1, 1955: Rosa Parks refuses to give up her seat to a white man on a Montgomery, Alabama bus. Her defiant stance prompts a year-long Montgomery bus boycott.

January 10-11, 1957: Sixty Black pastors and civil rights leaders from several southern states—including Martin Luther King Jr.—meet in Atlanta, Georgia to coordinate nonviolent protests against racial discrimination and segregation.

September 4, 1957: Nine Black students known as the "Little Rock Nine" are blocked from integrating into Little Rock Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas. President Dwight D. Eisenhower eventually sends federal troops to escort the students, however, they continue to be harassed.

September 9, 1957: Eisenhower signs the Civil Rights Act of 1957 into law to help protect voter rights. The law allows federal prosecution of those who suppress another's right to vote.

February 1, 1960: Four African American college students in Greensboro, North Carolina refuse to leave a Woolworth's "whites only" lunch counter without being served. The Greensboro Four - Ezell Blair Jr., David Richmond, Franklin McCain and Joseph McNeil - were inspired by the nonviolent protest of Gandhi. The Greensboro Sit-In, as it came to be called, sparks similar "sit-ins" throughout the city and in other states.

How the Greensboro Four Sit-In Sparked a Movement

When four Black students refused to move from a segregated Woolworth's lunch counter in 1960, nation-wide student activism gained momentum.

November 14, 1960: Six-year-old Ruby Bridges is escorted by four armed federal marshals as she becomes the first student to integrate William Frantz Elementary School in New Orleans. Her actions inspired Norman Rockwell's painting *The Problem We All Live With* (1964).



1961: Throughout 1961, Black and white activists, known as freedom riders, took bus trips through the American South to protest segregated bus terminals and attempted to use “whites-only” restrooms and lunch counters. The Freedom Rides were marked by horrific violence from white protestors, they drew international attention to their cause.

May 2, 1963: More than 1,000 Black school children march through Birmingham, Alabama in a demonstration against segregation. The goal of the non-violent demonstration, which became known as the "Children's Crusade," was to provoke the city's leaders to desegregate. Although the police were mostly restrained the first day, that did not continue.

Law enforcement brought out water hoses and police dogs. Journalists documented the young demonstrators getting arrested and hosed down by the Birmingham police, causing national outrage. Eventually an agreement was made to desegregate lunch counters, businesses and restrooms and improve hiring opportunities for Black people in Birmingham.

The Fight Against Segregation in Birmingham

June 11, 1963: Governor George C. Wallace stands in a doorway at the University of Alabama to block two Black students from registering. The standoff continues until President John F. Kennedy sends the National Guard to the campus.

August 28, 1963: Approximately 250,000 people take part in The March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. Martin Luther King gives his “I Have A Dream” speech as the closing address in front of the Lincoln Memorial, stating, “I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: ‘We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal.’”

September 15, 1963: A bomb at 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama kills four young girls and injures several other people prior to Sunday services. The bombing fuels angry protests.

July 2, 1964: President Lyndon B. Johnson signs the Civil Rights Act of 1964 into law, preventing employment discrimination due to race, colour, sex, religion or national origin. Title VII of the Act establishes the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) to help prevent workplace discrimination.

February 21, 1965: Black religious leader Malcolm X is assassinated during a rally by members of the Nation of Islam.

March 7, 1965: Bloody Sunday. In the Selma to Montgomery March, around 600 civil rights marchers walk to Selma, Alabama to Montgomery—the state's capital—in protest of Black voter suppression. Local police block and brutally attack them. After successfully fighting in court for their right to march, Martin Luther King and other civil rights leaders lead two more marches and finally reach Montgomery on March 25.

August 6, 1965: President Johnson signs the Voting Rights Act of 1965 to prevent the use of literacy tests as a voting requirement. It also allowed federal examiners to review voter qualifications and federal observers to monitor polling places.

April 4, 1968: Martin Luther King Jr. is assassinated on the balcony of his hotel room in Memphis, Tennessee. James Earl Ray is convicted of the murder in 1969.

April 11, 1968: President Johnson signs the Civil Rights Act of 1968, also known as the Fair Housing Act, providing equal housing opportunity regardless of race, religion or national origin.

6. Luck – and gambling.

Luck, defined as "fortune good or bad, what happens to one by chance (conceived as being favourable or not). Good luck, a quality or having a tendency to receive desired or beneficial outcome.," The word, not found in Old English, comes probably from early Middle Dutch 'luc', shortening of 'gheluc', "happiness, good fortune," a word of unknown origin.

If you say 'Good luck' or 'Best of luck' to someone, you are telling them that you hope they will be successful in something they are trying to do.

Luck is something that happens by chance. Fortune is something that happens by choice. Being Lucky means chance favoured you accidentally.

Being born to a rich family is lucky, because it happened by pure chance, you did nothing to make it happen, it just did, (unless you believe in karma which is a whole different story)

A common theme to theories of karma is its principle of causality. This relationship between karma and causality is a central motif in all schools of Hindu, Buddhist, and Jain thought. One of the earliest associations of karma to causality occurs in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad verses 4.4.5–6:

“Now as a man is like this or like that,
according as he acts and according as he behaves, so will he be;
a man of good acts will become good, a man of bad acts, bad;
he becomes pure by pure deeds, bad by bad deeds;

And here they say that a person consists of desires,
and as is his desire, so is his will;
and as is his will, so is his deed;
and whatever deed he does, that he will reap.”

In other words, good ethical behaviour generates grounds for hope; if not in space-time then, eventually, in divine eternity.

Acting/behaving well does not guarantee a happy future. After all, though Jesus Christ behaved immaculately, he died a most gruesome death

“I’m feeling lucky” is used metaphorically as an expression of sincere or superstitious confidence in the random outcomes of events. A form of the phrase is especially associated with Harry Callahan (Clint Eastwood) in the classic 1977 western ‘Dirty Harry’.

Feeling lucky enhances hope. It does not guarantee it. Reality is one thing. Perception – and feelings about the future - are two different things.

Napoleon often talked about luck. He knew what it was all about, so he responded to the critics, 'Give me lucky generals'. Many times, he analysed his possible future collaborators, or even his enemies, asking, 'I know he's a good general, but is he lucky?'

Luck increases hope. Bad luck predicts failure. "Luck" is the force that seems to operate for good or ill in a person's life, as in shaping circumstances, events, or opportunities: 'With my luck I'll probably get pneumonia.' 'He had no luck finding work.'

Gambling can become a destructive obsession. It can also be fun, challenging – and, at times, dirty.

In horse racing, odds can be improved if you study the horse’s recent form, the state of the track, the name of the jockey and find out how much the owners have bet.

Betting can be, as shown by up to fifteen Tory candidates and officials betting - with odds 5-1 - on the date of the upcoming election in July 2024, dirty, dishonest and, I believe, as insider trading – criminal. They knew the date had been fixed. There was no chance of them getting it wrong.

Some gamblers have told me that they believe in an occasional “lucky streak”, during which they live with heightened hope.

Maybe you’re not a gambler, but you probably have a grasp of the concept of a “hot hand” or a lucky streak. I’ve wondered before - is this a real phenomenon? My own experience suggests it could be, but one person’s anecdotes are just that.

Luck-ily, a new study of online betting shows that the concept of a “hot hand” is real, but perhaps not for the reasons you might expect. The study found that when a person wins a bet, they become increasingly likely to succeed after each win. The converse is also true: Once you lose a bet, you become progressively more likely to keep losing.

The fascinating study looked at 565,915 sports bets made by 776 online gamblers in Europe and the United States, and found that, all things being equal, you’re likely to win or lose 48 percent of the time (draws presumably account for the remaining 4 percent). After a single winning bid, the chance of winning a second goes up ever so slightly to 49 percent. But here’s where things get interesting. After the second win, the chance of winning a third time increases to 57 percent. After that: 67 percent. Following a four-bet winning streak, the chances of scoring a fifth haul increase to 72 percent. The probability of a sixth win is then 75 percent, and finally, after six wins, bettors had a 76 percent chance of notching lucky No. 7.

What the heck is going on here? What probably explains this pattern is that after each win, people selected bets with better odds. Bettors appear to assume that after each win, they were

more likely to lose—to regress to the mean, as they say—and so they compensate by making safer bets.

Winners worried their good luck was not going to continue, so they selected safer odds. By doing so, they became more likely to win.’

The study, published this month in the journal *Cognition*, also found that losses can breed more losses. After losing twice, the chances of winning decreased to 40 percent. After four losses, the chance of winning was 27 percent. After six duds, you have only a 23 percent chance of winning. The explanation: after each loss, gamblers on average choose bets that are less likely to turn out, apparently assuming that they are more likely to win than before—and perhaps to make up their losses (although, on average, people gamble less after each loss). As you probably know, bets with a lower chance of winning have higher pay-outs.

The idea that one is more likely to lose after winning, or more likely to win after losing, is known as the gambler’s fallacy (in reality, all things being equal, one is just as likely to lose or win on any given bet, assuming one is betting on independent events that don’t effect each other’s outcomes, as is the case with the vast majority of sports bets). This stands in contrast to the “hot hand fallacy”: that one is more likely to win while on a hot streak. Bettors apparently don’t generally believe this to be true, or at least their behaviour suggests they don’t.

“The result is ironic: Winners worried their good luck was not going to continue, so they selected safer odds,” the researchers wrote. “By doing so, they became more likely to win. The losers expected the luck to turn, so they took riskier odds. However, this made them even more likely to lose. The gamblers’ fallacy created the hot hand.”

The researchers, Juemin Xu and Nigel Harvey at University College, London, conducted the study by examining the online betting activities of people on sports such as horse racing and soccer.

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A fine encouragement to live a hope-filled life.

“Go placidly amid the noise and the haste, and remember what peace there may be in silence. As far as possible, without surrender, be on good terms with all persons. Speak your truth quietly and clearly; and listen to others, even to the dull and the ignorant; they too have their story.

Avoid loud and aggressive persons; they are vexatious to the spirit. If you compare yourself with others, you may become vain or bitter, for always there will be greater and lesser persons than yourself.

Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans. Keep interested in your own career, however humble; it is a real possession in the changing fortunes of time. Exercise caution in your business affairs, for the world is full of trickery. But let this not blind you to what virtue there is; many persons strive for high ideals, and everywhere life is full of heroism.

Be yourself. Especially do not feign affection. Neither be cynical about love; for in the face of all aridity and disenchantment, it is as perennial as the grass. Take kindly the counsel of the years, gracefully surrendering the things of youth. Nurture strength of spirit to shield you in sudden misfortune.

But do not distress yourself with dark imaginings. Many fears are born of fatigue and loneliness.

Beyond a wholesome discipline, be gentle with yourself. You are a child of the universe no less than the trees and the stars; you have a right to be here.

And whether or not it is clear to you, no doubt the universe is unfolding as it should.

Therefore, be at peace with God, whatever you conceive Him to be. And whatever your labours and aspirations, in the noisy confusion of life, keep peace in your soul.

With all its sham, drudgery and broken dreams, it is still a beautiful world. Be cheerful.

Strive to be happy.”

Max Ehrmann (USA,1872-1945)

7.Predicting the future?

Did you in your humanity, dear Yesh, having taught peace, hope your followers would organise Crusades and kill so many, and, your Church's authorities torture and execute so many- to keep Your Church's truths pure?

Sixth Sense: an ability that some people believe they have that seems to give them information without using the five senses of sight, hearing, touch, smell, or taste. Eg *A sixth sense told me that the train was going to crash.*

A premonition is an intuitive feeling that something is about to occur. It can be positive as well as negative. It is wise to trust this ‘gut feeling’.

Came across this on Quora:

Anne Brown, Artist (born1985)

Had heard the question, “Why do people have premonitions?”

And wrote,

“I think this is an interesting question. A premonition has to be knowledge of a future event that comes true. I’ve had three premonitions that I can recall with clarity.

One was so mundane. I dreamed that I picked up a rock and there were worms under it. I completely forgot that dream until the next day when I happened to pick up a rock and it was just like my dream. We were lining the driveway with rocks at the time, so it’s not like I remember the dream and started going around picking up rocks.

So you could say it was a coincidence. A lot of people would say that actually. I found it rather shocking though. How did I know something from the future?

The second and third times were more intense and involved my son. One was that on my way home after LaMaze class, where the teacher said the statistics were that one in our class would have a c-section and the rest a natural delivery. As we were driving home, like a bolt of lightning, I just “knew” it would be me and sure enough, that happened. Was it a case of a self-fulfilling prophecy and if so, how did I have that much control over my body that I was forced to have a C-section in order to save my son’s life?

The third was horrifying. When my son was around 2 or 3, I “knew” we were going to lose him. I didn’t know how or when, but I knew it. I told my husband and would mention it every once in awhile to him. I debated even telling him, I guess I wanted assurance it wouldn’t happen.

Two years before we did lose him, I would get horrible feelings, usually at night lying in bed. I would get waves of fear and almost panic flow over me and then they’d disappear as fast as they came. It happened a lot during that two years and then one night I got the phone call that my son had been killed. He was 27. Was this every parent’s nightmare and it coincidentally came true for me? Or did I really know something?

If you get into the science of premonitions, premonitions don’t exist. It’s looked at as woo woo, pseudo-science, not taken seriously, etc. It’s not possible that we can see into the future, yet at the same time science says that time is an illusion, a dimension, and some theories state that all time exists “now”, there is no future or past, it’s just that we experience time as linear. What are our brains (or consciousness) capable of that we’re unaware of? What is in the big picture that we don’t scientifically recognize yet, because I do believe there is a rational answer for everything. Obviously, I am leaving religion out of this whole post because I am an atheist and don’t for a second, believe any god was telling me something. It just occurred to me that a lot of people will say it was God talking to me or something. If that’s the case, how nice of him to let me worry for 27 years about losing my son and then taking him away from me.

So, in the end, I’m still left wondering. Were they really premonitions or just something we can’t explain yet.”

How does that grab you, dear reader?

On 22.7.24, in The Metro London newspaper, I read, "A psychic who predicted there would be an assassination attempt on Donald Trump has claimed he will win the US election.

Craig Hamilton-Parker, dubbed the ‘new Nostradamus’, says he can see into the future and has accurately predicted events like the Covid-19 pandemic, Brexit, and Trump being elected president.

He’s also spoken to Metro.co.uk previously about his predictions for the year and some of these predictions have already come true.

Last weekend, Trump was shot by 20-year-old gunman Thomas Matthew Crooks at a rally at an outdoor venue in Pennsylvania. However, just two days before, the psychic had made the eerie prediction on his YouTube channel that there would be an attempt on Trump's life."

Astrology

Most human civilizations – India, Greece, Egypt, Mesopotamia, Rome, and Persia, among others – in their quest, their hope - for predicting the future, used complex systems of astrology, imagining that the cosmos influenced – indeed determined - events on earth.

Astrological tradition contributed to the development of astronomy as the study of the skies provided invaluable insights about celestial bodies. For instance, the Ptolemaic astrological tradition has already listed some of the planets in the Solar System and their movements.

Astrology encompasses various approaches. Sidereal and tropical astrology represent different ways of mapping the zodiac against the backdrop of the stars from a geocentric perspective. Heliocentric astrology focuses on the Sun as the central point of reference, while psychological astrology delves into the intricate connections between celestial movements and the human psyche.

Across different cultures, astrology has taken on unique forms and interpretations. Chinese, Hindu, Islamic, Jewish, Tibetan, and Western astrology each offer distinct insights into the connection between the cosmos and human affairs.

To help you realise how much effort over so many centuries have been invested in this, I offer you an incomplete list of the different traditions, types, systems, methods, applications, and branches of astrology.

By type

- Horoscopic astrology – Astrology defined by the ascendant
- Natal astrology – Form of astrology based on time of birth
- Sun sign astrology – Astrology focused on the Sun sign

By period and place

- Babylonian astrology (c. 1800 BCE – c. 1200 BCE)
- Chinese astrology (c. 1050 BCE – present)
- Hellenistic astrology (2nd century BCE – 7th century CE)
- Hindu astrology (2nd century CE – present)
- Western astrology (2nd century CE – Jewish astrology (c. 350 CE – present)
- Early Irish astrology (7th – 11th centuries CE)
- Islamic astrology (7th century CE – ?)
- Heliocentric astrology (c. 1640 – present)
- Christian Astrology - a book written in 1647 by the English astrologer William Lilly
- Psychological astrology - rooted in the work of psychologist-astrologer Carl Jung, beginning c. 1920

By function

- Electional astrology – Form of astrology used for planning events
- Agricultural astrology – Electional astrology for horticulture

Katarchic astrology – Historical form of electional astrology
Horary astrology – Form of astrology for answering questions posed
Judicial astrology – Form of astrology for forecasting events
Locational astrology – Astrology that factors in locations on Earth
Medical astrology – Astrology of the human physiology
Meteorological astrology – Using astrology for weather forecasting
Mundane astrology – Branch of astrology dealing with politics, government, and law.
How people hope to predict the future in some cases are unpredictable.

Etc.

1. In Metro newspaper, 10th June 2024, found this piece.

“A fortune teller who uses asparagus to predict the future has given a prediction on how England will perform in the Euros.

Jemima Packington, 67, has revealed that England will end 58 years of hurt and WIN Euro 2024. She claims she can peer into the future by tossing asparagus spears into the air and then interpreting how they land on the ground.”

She is the world's only asparamancer and previously correctly predicted Brexit, the Queen's death, as well as Harry and Meghan quitting the Royal Family.

2

.Divination, the practice of determining the hidden significance or cause of events, sometimes foretelling the future, by various natural, psychological, and other techniques. Found in all civilizations, both ancient and modern, it is encountered most frequently in contemporary mass society in the form of horoscopes, astrology, crystal gazing, tarot cards, and the Ouija board.

Before the start of the Battle of Midway (4 June 1942), the crew knew it was going to be a tough day because they were given steak and egg for breakfast: a reliable prediction of the quality of their hours ahead.

3. Mathematics can be used to make predictions about future events and phenomena, but the accuracy of these predictions depends on a variety of factors, such as the quality of the data being used, the assumptions made in the mathematical model, and the complexity of the system being studied.

Mathematics is a tool that can be used to make predictions about certain aspects of the future, but it cannot predict the future with complete accuracy or certainty. For example, mathematical models can be used to predict future trends in areas such as finance, economics, and weather patterns.

4. Political manifestoes hope to convince the electorate to vote for their party.

When in 1945 the war in Europe ended, an election was called. Labour presented the country with a radical programme, including the nationalisation of coal, railways and steel; the formation of a National Health Service; and a nationwide extensive housing programme.

Labour won the election with a majority of 160 parliamentary seats. Most of the Manifesto promises were carried out within five years.

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A happy hope-filled song to end this section.

“Here Comes the Sun”

“Here comes the sun, doo-doo-doo-doo
Here comes the sun, and I say
It's alright

Little darlin', it's been a long, cold, lonely winter
Little darlin', it feels like years since it's been here

Here comes the sun, doo-doo-doo-doo
Here comes the sun, and I say
It's alright

Little darlin', the smile's returning to their faces
Little darlin', it seems like years since it's been here

Here comes the sun
Here comes the sun, and I say
It's alright

Sun, sun, sun, here it comes
Sun, sun, sun, here it comes
Sun, sun, sun, here it comes
Sun, sun, sun, here it comes
Sun, sun, sun, here it comes

Little darlin', I feel that ice is slowly melting
Little darlin', it seems like years since it's been clear

Here comes the sun, doo-doo-doo-doo
Here comes the sun, and I say
It's alright

Here comes the sun, doo-doo-doo-doo
Here comes the sun
It's alright
It's alright.”

1969 Song by The Beatles. [written by George Harrison(1943-2001).]

8. Enabling our hope to shape reality.

Many years ago, praying the Psalms helped my hope to grow.

Psalm 62:5-6

For God alone my soul waits in silence,
for my hope is from Him.
He alone is my rock and my salvation,
my fortress; I shall not be shaken.

Psalm 33:19

Truly the eye of the Lord is on those who fear Him,
on those who hope in His steadfast love...

Psalm 42:5-6a

Why are you cast down, O my soul,
and why are you disquieted within me?
Hope in God; for I shall again praise Him,
my help and my God.

Psalm 71:1-6

In you, O Lord, I take refuge;
let me never be put to shame.
In your righteousness deliver me and rescue me;
incline your ear to me and save me.
Be to me a rock of refuge,
a strong fortress, to save me,
for you are my rock and my fortress.
Rescue me, O my God, from the hand of the wicked,
from the grasp of the unjust and cruel.
For you, O Lord, are my hope,
my trust, O Lord, from my youth.
Upon you I have leaned from my birth;
it was you who took me from my mother's womb.
My praise is continually of you...

There were approximately 40 million refugees in Europe at the end of the war and an estimated 60 million worldwide. For many, their lives had been shattered and their homes had been completely taken by war. They had to hope to build completely new lives from scratch. Their hope motivated them to succeed.

To live in hope, it is vital to concentrate on the process in hand rather than worrying about the outcome – as Rory McIlroy showed all too clearly – and for him sadly.

It seems to me that a great golfer, like Rory McIlroy, has had – has developed – a lower self-confidence than he had when he won so many competitions: a four-time major champion, winning the 2011 U.S. Open, 2012 PGA Championship, 2014 Open Championship, and 2014 PGA Championship. However, since then nowt.

Thirteen years after winning his first US Open and maiden major at Congressional – and 3,599 days since winning the 2014 US PGA – McIlroy looked set to finally get back in the

winner's circle when he led by two shots with five holes to play. However, suddenly, loss of self-confidence can lead to disaster. Muscle-memory congeals.

In the US Open this year, McIlroy twice had a one-shot lead at Pinehurst No. 2 until he choked and closed with three bogeys in his last four holes, missing a 30-inch par putt on the 16th hole and a par putt from just inside 4 feet on the 18th hole.

Commentators think that he will be haunted for the rest of his life after choking a golden opportunity to end major drought as, Bryson DeChambeau snuck in to win his second - 2024 - US Open title.

However, maybe his support team will draw his attention to Jana Novotna who, playing Steffi Graf in the 1993 Wimbledon women's tennis final, was in a strong position - she led the match 6-7, 6-4, and had a game point at 4-1 in the third and final set. She was in a virtually unassailable position. Despite this, suddenly, she lost her self-confidence. And lost the game as Graf won the final five games of the match and the Grand Slam title.

As the experts stated, Novotna 'choked' during the final set. However, she learned. Her moment of Wimbledon success finally arrived in 1998. After defeating Venus Williams in a close quarterfinal, Novotná avenged the previous year's loss by ousting Martina Hingis in the semi-final in straight sets. She won the singles title by defeating veteran Nathalie Tauziat in the final in two sets. She became the oldest first-time Grand Slam singles winner in the Open Era at the age of 29 years and nine months.

So, Rory may yet come back and return to his winning ways of long ago.

Apart from, of course Jesus Christ, there are three men of hope that I admire - and wanted to include in this book.

They are Mohandas K Gandhi who, I read, "mounted a revolution on hope and love, hope and non-violence" and who died a martyr in 1948.

He inspired Martin Luther King, who himself died a martyr in 1968. His approach to life was rooted in The Sermon on The Mount.

The third is Nelson Mandela (1918-2013) who did his best to bring peace and harmony in South Africa and around the world - and was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1993 and the Presidential Medal of Honour in 2002.

Nelson Mandela wrote, "I am fundamentally an optimist. Part of being an optimist is keeping one's head pointed towards the sun, one's feet moving forward. There are many dark moments when my faith in humanity is sorely tested, but I would not and could not give myself up to despair. That way lays defeat and death." "Long walk to freedom" by Nelson Mandela, 1994.

Desire and Hope.

Hope is the yearning for a future situation — typically in the belief (faith) that it is feasible. Desire is merely wanting something fervently — even if implausible or impossible and without the element of faith that characterizes hope.

The primary difference between hope and desire is that hope involves an expectation or belief that something positive will happen in the future, while desire is simply a wish or longing for something, without any certainty about whether it will be fulfilled.

Hope implies a more optimistic and confident outlook - there is a sense that the desired outcome is possible or even likely to occur. Desire, on the other hand, is more of a feeling of wanting something, without any strong conviction that it will actually materialize.

Hope also tends to be more focused on an external, specific outcome, whereas desire can be more open-ended and diffuse. We might hope for a particular job offer or a certain relationship, but we simply desire happiness, success, or fulfilment in a more general sense.

Additionally, hope often provides motivation and resilience in the face of challenges, as the belief that something positive is possible can sustain us through difficult times. Desire alone, without hope, may lead to feelings of frustration or despair if the desired outcome does not come to pass.

In summary, hope includes an element of expectation and confidence, while desire is more purely a longing or wish, without any assurance of fulfilment. Both can be powerful human experiences, but they represent distinct psychological states and modes of relating to the future

An example to illustrate the difference between hope and desire:

Imagine a young person who is applying to college. They have a strong desire to attend a prestigious university and study a subject they are passionate about. This desire represents their wish or longing to have this opportunity.

However, they also have hope that they will get accepted to their dream school. This hope is based on their academic achievements, extracurricular activities, and belief that they have a good chance of being admitted. The hope goes beyond just wanting it - it involves an expectation that it is possible and likely to happen.

Now, let's say this person gets rejected from their top choice university. With just a desire, they may feel crushed and give up on their academic goals. But because they also had hope, they are able to maintain resilience and determination.

They may then refocus their hope on getting into their second-choice school, or finding an alternative path to achieve their academic and career aspirations. The hope provides them with the motivation to persevere, whereas the desire alone may have left them feeling hopeless in the face of setbacks.

In this example, the desire represents the individual's wish and longing, while the hope reflects their positive outlook and belief that their goals can be realized, even if the path is not straightforward. The presence of hope helps transform a mere wish into an expectation that guides their actions and sustains them through challenges.

The lyrics of the 1996 hugely successful Spice Girls song 'Wannabe' focus on hope and desire..

“ Ha ha ha ha ha

Yo, I'll tell you what I want, what I really, really want
So tell me what you want, what you really, really want
I'll tell you what I want, what I really, really want
So tell me what you want, what you really, really want
I wanna, (ha) I wanna, (ha) I wanna, (ha) I wanna, (ha)
I wanna really, really, really wanna zigzag ah

If you want my future, forget my past
If you wanna get with me, better make it fast
Now don't go wasting my precious time
Get your act together we could be just fine

I'll tell you what I want, what I really, really want
So tell me what you want, what you really, really want
I wanna, (ha) I wanna, (ha) I wanna, (ha) I wanna, (ha)
I wanna really, really, really wanna zigzag ah
If you wanna be my lover, you gotta get with my friends
(Gotta get with my friends)
Make it last forever, friendship never ends
If you wanna be my lover, you have got to give
Taking is too easy, but that's the way it is

Oh, what do you think about that?
Now you know how I feel
Say you can handle my love, are you for real?
(Are you for real?)
I won't be hasty, I'll give you a try
If you really bug me then I'll say goodbye

Yo, I'll tell you what I want, what I really, really want
So tell me what you want, what you really, really want
I wanna, (ha) I wanna, (ha) I wanna, (ha) I wanna, (ha)
I wanna really, really, really wanna zigzag ah

If you wanna be my lover, you gotta get with my friends
(Gotta get with my friends)
Make it last forever, friendship never ends
If you wanna be my lover, you have got to give
(You've got to give)
Taking is too easy, but that's the way it is

So, here's a story from A to Z
You wanna get with me, you gotta listen carefully
We got Em in the place who likes it in your face
You got G like MC who likes it on a
Easy V doesn't come for free, she's a real lady
And as for me, ha you'll see

Slam your body down and wind it all around
Slam your body down and wind it all around

If you wanna be my lover, you gotta get with my friends
(Gotta get with my friends)
Make it last forever, friendship never ends
If you wanna be my lover, you have got to give
(You've got to give)
Taking is too easy, but that's the way it is

If you wanna be my lover
You gotta, you gotta, you gotta, you gotta, you gotta
Slam, slam, slam, slam (make it last forever)

Slam your body down and wind it all around
Slam your body down and wind it all around
Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha
Slam your body down and wind it all around
Slam your body down and zigzag ah
If you wanna be my lover.”

As feminist anthems go, “Wannabe” might be a bit light on However, there’s no denying the song’s cultural impact on how entertainment and media saw women, female friendship, and sexuality. “Wannabe” got young women talking about feminism at a time when it was very much an F-word in mainstream culture.

Detectives such as More, Poirot, Father Brown and Vera hope to solve the mystery and identify the culprit of the crime. Script-writers make sure they succeed.

In preparation for the D Day invasion of Normandy – and hoping to make it a more probable success - two Mulberry Harbours were built and PLUTO pipes and pumps prepared. Both the harbours and the Pipe Line Under The Ocean were a success. Operation PLUTO - from August 1944 to Spring 1945 - was reported to have pumped more than 172 million gallons of fuel over to France – no small achievement for what is considered the world's first undersea fuel pipeline.

People high in hope tend to focus on what's in front of them. They don't dwell on the past or worry about the future, though they do set goals for themselves. They stay focused on what's happening right now. This allows them to stay positive and act.

While at Imperial College -1958-62 – I took up rowing and thus learned that while stroking an eight, I was moving backwards into the future. It reminded me that hope is like that. You trust the cox – who in my life is Jesus Christ – and who does see what lies ahead. We live without seeing where we are going. As in a boat there is a cox who does look forward, in my life, *Yesh* is the cox I trust. Thus, one of the sentences that underpins my life’s strategy is, “I’ll do my best and leave the rest to God.”

On March 17, 1942, General Douglas MacArthur made his famous declaration, "I shall return"(some say it was "I will return"): a promise and a hope - fulfilled 20th October

1944.(*) He knew the USA potential – vastly greater than Japan’s. He knew that time would turn the tide.

Hoping that something works out is suggesting that you have no control over it, as if it’s totally up to luck or chance. While there are certain scenarios that are out of our control, it’s not always the case. You got fired? You broke up with your lover? You failed a test? Did you have control over any of those outcomes? In most cases, I’d bet that you did.

So, what can we do when we have control over the outcome? Let’s break down the word *hope* and create a new plan of action.

H = Hatch an idea of what you want to achieve

O = Obsess over it

P = Plan on how to achieve it

E = Endure all obstacles

I will use the example of setting up SPEC at All Saints Pastoral Centre.

In January 1989, as soon as he returned to Archbishop’s House from his Christmas break at Hare Street and I had come up into his office to welcome him with the usual banalities and jokes about his time away, Father Basil suddenly said: “Have you a moment, Vlad.” “For you, of course.” And I sat down next his desk – right hand side.

The words he came up with etched themselves into me memory: “Vlad, we have to do something to help young people find God in their lives. I don’t know what it is. But would you do it?”

(*) I suspect he used ‘shall’ as traditionally, conventions dictate that: 'Will' when used in the first person, conveys an obligation, whereas 'shall' merely a future intention. Conversely, when used in the second or third person, 'will' conveys a future obligation, whilst 'shall' imports compulsion and obligation.

Having been an Abbot, he knew how to butter people up to make sure he got his ways. So, he continued, “I can think of someone to run the Cathedral, the Seminary, the University Chaplaincy but I cannot think of anyone but you to do this.” So, of course, I said “yes.”

1: Hatched an idea.

I had spent a couple of years hunting round the diocese for a home for my dream of centre for young people. To “help young people find God in their lives” I wanted to set up a centre that would replicate – in some way – the YAP experiences at Lourdes: a residential peer-education centre where young people could learn how to acquire the virtues, they would need to make the best fist of their lives; to fulfil their God-given potential.

Then in 1991 Father Basil told me that John Gibbs had informed him that the VMM’s - Volunteer Missionary Movement’s - lease on what had been an orphanage at All Saints, London Colney, was going to run out that Summer; perhaps that building could do the trick.

So, off I went to visit them. I could see the possibilities of St Raphael, originally built as an orphanage in 1908 by the Church of England All Saints Sisters of the Poor who had moved out from London in 1901. The Diocese acquired the site in 1973.

When I reported my positive view to Father Basil, he said ‘fine’ and appointed me ‘Director of All Saints’. He added that he was sure I could sort out the problem with the management of All Saints. No longer needed to house sit The Hermitage, I moved to All Saints Pastoral Centre (ASPC), with its 77 acres, was a conference and retreat centre at London Colney on the southern outskirts of St Albans, Hertfordshire: AL2 1AF.

2: Obsess over it.

The peer-educational centre needed a name. One morning, lying on my bed in The Turner Suite – the name of the best guest-suite at ASPC where I was lodged until my permanent accommodation became available - I stared at the large mirror there on the wall. “That’s it! It will be The Mirror Centre. Young people will be able to look at themselves and reflect on their lives.”

However, Mirror is the name of a newspaper. Perhaps a Latin name? *Speculum Vitae* – remembering my Latin - it would be a mirror of and to life. Too long. Then, let us call it the SPEC centre. On spec, come to SPEC.

Ah, and it will be a

Spiritual Peer Educational Centre.

Supporting Pre-evangelisation, Evangelisation and Catechises.

Cool!

SPEC needed a competent couple to run it. Here, Providence gave me a helping hand.

In 1991, I had invited Sheila O’Donnell, a director of the Upper Room Community in St Albans, to give one of keynote talks on our October YAP. The evening after her talk, having taken her to the bar for a well-deserved drink at Hotel *Méditerranée* – The Med, as we called it - that YAP always used, she asked me what I was up to. I said that I was working on setting up a residential retreat centre for young people.

What a wonderful surprise when she replied that her sister Sandra - and her husband David Satchell - had been talking of giving up working in The City to run a retreat centre for young people.

Having obtained their contacts from Sheila, on Monday late afternoon I drove to their Old Hatfield home. By Thursday of that week, they had signed a contract with the diocese.

3: Plan on how to achieve it.

From the Diocesan Archives I obtained copies the architectural plans of St Raphael – the name of the building that was to become SPEC. With David and Sandra, we started to work out what needed to be done to bring the building up to spec.

The draconian planning officer for St Albans, Andrew Robley, who had acquired – and as I discovered, rightly – a reputation of not allowing any changes to older buildings, blocked planning consent for an essential ground-floor toilet block at SPEC.

However, I had befriended St Alban's Councillors Dreda Gordon, Chris Flynn and Malcolm Macmillan, showed them around SPEC and explained our predicament. Consequently, while attending our second appeal meeting, I heard Malcolm say something like, "as a rule we do not override the advice from our officers. However, in this case, there is a serious pastoral need and so we will approve the planning petition." We got our toilet block.

To stay focused on the reality of peer-education, I decided never to attend national - or international - youth conferences. I suspect I was nudged to make this choice by - when I was still at The Cathedral – hearing how an outstanding Headmaster spent so much time lecturing around the world on how to make a school great, that due to his frequent absences, his school (which shall remain nameless) went down the chute. Years earlier I had read somewhere that 'the main thing is to keep the main thing the main thing'. To this commitment I remained faithful while I was able to work with young people in our diocese.

4: Endure all obstacles

The night before every pilgrimage – both YAP and Diocesan; I had nightmares – which gradually became firm friends. Each year, I could emulate the successes of the past. I would be walking down corridors, around corners, up and down stairs – without bannisters – that ended in thin air; or a cul de sac. They may have been fortresses or castles and strange houses where corridors turned into tunnels and I was forced to crawl along crumbling roofs and battlements – until suddenly I awoke. Sweating.

Eventually they became like horror movies I had seen before. I realised they expressed the panic in my heart. It meant I would have enough adrenaline to do my job. It is only now that I am no longer responsible for the pilgrimages that I can calmly admit the facts.

Recalling the Hall of Mirrors in Prague, I obtained from hotels that were re-furbishing, dozens of mirrors. In the entrance to SPEC, I placed two of them that were almost parallel to each other. Placing their feet on the markers provided, guests, looking sideways, could see dozens of their heads – gradually fading round a bend. I placed them there to prod/nudge our guests into reflecting on how many complex characters there are within each one of us.

Ahead, there were two mirrors; one above the other, set slightly at an angle so the body and arms seem as though cut and pasted, had slipped sideways. As our visitor walked forwards, the slippage shrunk until, right up close, it disappeared. With these visuals, there was my audio voice. "Here in SPEC, as you move forward, you can pull yourself together and become more as God would like you to be. Free."

In SPEC, I placed a copy of Hereford Cathedral's *Mappa Mundi* to challenge our young guests as to what was at the centre of their life. I placed a picture of the Rosetta Stone to help young people think about communication and understanding others. I hung large old maps of the world with the questions, "Are you as you thought you were? Or do you see yourself as you really are?"

In 1995, I launched Bright Lights (BL) a residential long-weekend festival for Young Adults set in the fields around SPEC. With liturgies, music and much more - to which we invited super speakers such as David Alton, Anthony Towey, Sheila Cassidy and Malcolm McMahon. Thanks to my role as Chaplain to The Knights of St Columba – Province 29 – I was able to recruit its members to help with security. After ASPC had been sold, BL was transferred to Aylesford Priory and – thanks to Sandra Satchell who is, still in 2020 responsible for Young People Provision in Birmingham Diocese - it is now hosted at Alton Castle.

SPEC was thriving. Occupancy high. However, there was a problem, especially at mealtimes. Primary school children did not sit well with sixth formers. I needed to find a solution.

The bereavement-loss of my sister in December 95 and mother in February 86, galvanized me to work on LOFT@SPEC – a centre for 9-15year olds.

There was a large loft in the Main House above the kitchen. To convert that into accommodation, I had to work on obtaining Planning Consent. Though, as Andrew Robley was still smarting from his earlier defeat, this second Consent was trickier than the first. However, in the end, we got there.

Thanks to my membership of The Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem I had befriended Gerald Murphy, an architect. Having shown him around and put him in the picture, I invited him to work out a scheme and with it a budget.

We needed just the funding. At that time the National Lottery had funds allocated to Young People. However, a bit of research showed that to obtain those funds, our application had to be spot on; using the right vocabulary. That pointed me in the direction of a gent who had worked at the Lottery and was now a consultant writing – at a price – those applications. The best £150 I ever spent.

I applied and obtained a National Lottery Grant of just under £200,000. Thanks to money left to me in the will of a lady I had been looking after for years, I added my own £50k. To cut a long construction story short, I was able to invite Basil Hume to bless LOFT@SPEC in 1998.

On the door to the LOFT@SPEC chapel there is a little photograph of a young boy cutting a ribbon as LOFT opened its doors and started to work with primary school aged children. I loved it.

It reminded me of what it took to get to that point in my life. Whenever I saw it, I thanked God, my friends and lists. To achieve anything in life, I learned the value of both Love and Lists: commitment and competence.

The SPEC experience showed that whilst a head may be educated in a classroom, for the heart to be converted and committed to God and thus the best there is in the world, a stay in a suitable place together with one's peer-group with appropriate supervision could be immensely more effective.

Prevention is far better than cure. Rather than allowing the young to become trapped in the nightmare of personal despair – and its effects of drugs, alcohol abuse and wasted lives – SPEC, complementing the work of schools and other agencies, offered a way towards an

authentic sense of identity, values and roles in society, helping the young to discover answers to their underlying questions of Who am I? What am I - What is anything worth? Why am I here, to do what with myself? In a word: a helping hand to self-sufficiency, even excellence.

By the time the diocese closed it in 2011, SPEC and Loft were interfacing with some 14,000 young people a year - with another 6,000 on School Missions.

Hope with wartime guts.

Just one example: Operation Pedestal, the 1942 convoy to Malta and its heroine, the American built tanker Ohio which, broken-backed, near awash, without propulsion managed to reach the Grand Harbour and discharge her cargo of oil into the Island's empty tanks.

The hope all involved had was magnificent - and took guts.

The Germans threw against the convoy some 100 aircraft: Junkers 87 dive-bombers, Junkers 88 bombers and Italian Savoia 79 torpedo aircraft, as well as submarines and E-boats.

The Royal Navy kept on keeping on towards Malta and managed to refuel it with food and fuel so it could carry on, eventually being awarded The George Cross for its own bravery.

Currently, though officially retired, I continue living in hope that I can keep on helping God make this world a better place. How I am doing this, you can see on my website fathervlad.com

In the Morse Code, di di di dah – the start of Beethoven's Fifth – is 'V', for victory. The outcome of realised hope.

Stubborn hope knows that "If at first you don't succeed, and you try and try again" you might succeed. It's the story of The Two Frogs.

"Two frogs fell into a bowl of milk. Having swum around the bowl, they realized that the edge of the bowl was too high and steep for them to get out unaided. The first frog, imagining that it was useless to waste his energy by continuing to swim since that would not get him out of the bowl, lost hope, gave up swimming and drowned.

The other - bursting with stubborn hope - keeps afloat by swimming furiously. By the morning, the milk had been churned into solid butter and the frog, jumping up from that butter, escapes."

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The founders of religious orders had great hopes for their followers.

Just six male and six female:

1. The order of St Benedict

Founded by St Benedict of Nursia.

St Benedict, with his Rule hoped that the monks would spend the rest of their lives living for God as a community. Each monastic community is autonomous, with its superior – who takes the place of Christ as leader of the community – applying the Rule of Saint Benedict in the manner that they see fit.

2.The Capuchins. The Order of Friars Minor Capuchin is a religious order of Franciscan friars within the Catholic Church, one of three "First Orders" that reformed from the Franciscan Friars Minor Observant, the other being the Conventuals.

Matteo da Bascio(1495-1552), born Matteo Serafini, was the co-founder and first Superior-General of the Order of Friars Minor Capuchins.

The first Capuchins lived mostly in hermitages but they soon began to live in small communities and hoped to serve the People of God through preaching and taking care of the poor in the towns they lived in, all the while spending much of their time in common and private prayer.

3.Order of Preachers, The Dominicans

The Order of Preachers was founded in 1216 by St. Dominic de Guzman(1170-1221) in the hope that informed preaching could control and eradicate the heresy preached by Cathars – also known as Albigensians - which denied the dignity of our humanity. The Dominicans I have met tend to be excellent teachers and preachers even now.

4.The Franciscans are a group of related mendicant religious orders of the Catholic Church. Founded in 1209 by the Italian saint, Francis of Assis(1181/82-1226) who hoped to live a Christlike life. His hope was becoming an Image of Christ:Francis wanted more than anything else to become like Jesus. He loved his Lord so much, that he tried to be like him as much as he could. He tried to be poor because Jesus was poor and had nothing. He tried to be humble because Christ lowered himself to become human like us. Idealist men came to him to learn and gradually the Franciscan Order took shape. The Rule of Francis was approved by Pope Innocent III in 1209.....

These orders - include three independent orders for men- have core values of service, humility, peace-making, contemplation, and collegiality.

5.The Jesuits, founded by St Ignatius of Loyola and St Francis Xavier who hoped to help their followers to seek God in an all things through their engagements in evangelisation and the apostolate.

Initially, St Ignatius Ignatius hoped to serve in the Holy Land but was ultimately turned away by the Franciscan custodians due to the precarious political situation of the time. So, he eventually found his way to Paris where he would study to become a priest and be better able to guide people on their spiritual path.

He hoped that his followers would labour with Christ in building the Kingdom of God. and s would teach what they lived, namely, to pray to come to know Christ more intimately, love him more ardently and follow him more closely.

Currently, the Jays are active in 112 countries.

6. The Augustinians, founded in 1244 by Pope Innocent IV (whose papacy lasted from 1243 to 1254) hoped to achieve Unitas (Unity), Veritas (Truth), and Caritas (Charity).

A. Poor Clares. St. Clare Of Assisi, Founder Of The Poor Clares (1194-1253), inspired by Francis of Assisi, hoped to emulate the life of Christ.

B. Ursulines. In 1535 in Brescia (in northern Italy), Angela Merici established the Company of St. Ursula, a very innovative secular form of consecration for women - without vows and common life, free from male supervision, offering women spiritual and material independence.

Angela hoped to educate women, strive for social justice, and live a life of service to the community service.

C. Carmelites, reformed by St Theresa of Avila and St John of the Cross, hope to live in God's presence and call people to a deeper faith in God's faithful presence and the establishment of the justice of God's reign. They strive to listen to God who speaks to them in many ways and especially in the words of Scripture.

Their motto, consists of the words of Elijah taken from the First Book of the Kings, 19:10: "With zeal have I been zealous for the Lord God of Hosts." In Latin, "Zelo zelatus sum pro Domino Deo exercituum."

St Theresa joined the Carmelites in 1535 and in 1558 she began to consider the restoration of Carmelite life to its original observance of austerity, which had relaxed in the 14th and 15th centuries.

D. Sisters of Charity. Moved by the plight of the needy in Ireland, in 1815 Mary Aikenhead founded the Sisters of Charity hoping to serve those living in poverty.

They hope to respond to the needs, pains and sufferings of others with concern, empathy and support; to treat all persons they serve with dignity; exhibit an attitude of acceptance and forgiveness and listening with empathy and attention to all with whom they work.

E. Handmaids of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Rafaela Porras Ayllón, religious name Mary of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, was a Spanish religious sister who in 1977 established the Handmaids of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in conjunction with her sister Dolores. They hoped to work at the education of children and run retreats.

F. The Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary (IBVM) – also known as the Loreto Sisters - founded St Mary's School in Ascot in 1885. The IBVM - founded in 1609 by Mary Ward who hoped women, intellectually equal to men, would achieve great things if properly educated – achieved – in spades - its aims.

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Advent Carols.

Hope is a central theme to the season of Advent. In the ‘Advent Carol of Hope’

By Dong Besig & Nancy Price, There is hope in every note. It moves from minor into major, from longing into fulfilment, and from shadows into light.

Easily learned, yet very effective, it's a great choice for any choir.

“Do you hear what I hear?

Said the night wind to the little lamb

Do you see what I see

Way up in the sky little lamb

Do you see what I see

A star, a star

Dancing in the night

With a tail as big as a kite

Said the little lamb to the shepherd boy

Do you hear what I hear

Ringing through the sky shepherd boy

Do you hear what I hear

A song, a song

High above the tree

With a voice as big as the sea

With a voice as big as the sea

Said the shepherd boy to the mighty king

Do you know what I know

In your palace wall mighty king

Do you know what I know

A child, a child

Shivers in the cold

Let us bring him silver and gold

Let us bring him silver and gold

Said the king to the people everywhere

Listen to what I say

Listen to what I say

Pray for peace people everywhere

Listen to what I say

The child, the child Sleeping in the night

He will bring us goodness and light

He will bring us goodness and light

The child, the child

Sleeping in the night

He will bring us goodness and light.”

+++

Oh, come, all ye faithful, Joyful and triumphant!

Oh, come ye, oh, come ye to Bethlehem;

Come and behold him Born the king of angels:

Oh, come, let us adore him,

Oh, come, let us adore him,

Oh, come, let us adore him,

Christ the Lord.

God of God Light of light

Lo He abhors not the virgin's womb

Very God, begotten not created

Sing, choirs of angels,

Sing in exultation,

Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!

Glory to God In the highest:

Oh, come, let us adore him,
Oh, come, let us adore him,
Oh, come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

+++

Then there is

"Land of Hope and Glory" a British patriotic song, with music by Edward Elgar, written in 1901 and with lyrics by A. C. Benson added in 1902.

1st Verse:

Dear Land of Hope, thy hope is crowned,
God make thee mightier yet!
On Sov'ran brows, beloved, renowned,
Once more thy crown is set.
Thine equal laws, by Freedom gained,
Have ruled thee well and long;
By Freedom gained, by Truth maintained,
Thine Empire shall be strong.

Chorus:

Land of Hope and Glory, Mother of the Free,
How shall we extol thee, who are born of thee?
Wider still and wider shall thy bounds be set;
God, who made thee mighty, make thee mightier yet,
God, who made thee mighty, make thee mightier yet!

2nd Verse:

Thy fame is ancient as the days,
As Ocean large and wide:
A pride that dares, and heeds not praise,
A stern and silent pride;
Not that false joy that dreams content
With what our sires have won;
The blood a hero sire hath spent
Still nerves a hero son.

Chorus

PS In January 2016, YouGov conducted a poll asking English adults about their preference for the English national anthem. "Land of Hope and Glory" was selected by 28%, "God Save the Queen" by 27%, "Jerusalem" by 18%, and other options were selected by 11%. "Don't know" was selected by 16%.

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HaTikvah ("The Hope") Israel's National Anthem

The words to Israel's national anthem were written in 1886 by Naphtali Herz Imber, an English poet originally from Bohemia. The melody was written by Samuel Cohen, an immigrant from Moldavia. Cohen based the melody on a musical theme found in Bedrich Smetana's "Moldau."

fran

“As long as within our hearts
The Jewish soul sings,
As long as forward to the East
To Zion, looks the eye –
Our hope is not yet lost,
It is two thousand years old,
To be a free people in our land
The land of Zion and Jerusalem.”

The French national anthem is underpinned by hope – hope of victory.

Verse 1:

Allons enfants de la patrie,
Le jour de gloire est arrivé !
Contre nous de la tyrannie
L'étendard sanglant est levé ! (bis)
Entendez-vous dans les campagnes,
Mugir ces féroces soldats ?
Ils viennent jusque dans nos bras
Égorger nos fils, nos compagnes!

Refrain:

*Aux armes, citoyens !
Formez vos bataillons !
Marchons ! Marchons !
Qu'un sang impur
Abreuve nos sillons !*

Verse 2:

Que veut cette horde d'esclaves,
De traîtres, de rois conjurés ?
Pour qui ces ignobles entraves,
Ces fers dès longtemps préparés ? (bis)
Français ! pour nous, ah ! quel outrage !
Quels transports il doit exciter !
C'est nous qu'on ose méditer
De rendre à l'antique esclavage !

Verse 1:

Let's go children of the fatherland,
The day of glory has arrived!
Against us tyranny's
Bloody flag is raised! (repeat)
In the countryside, do you hear
The roaring of these fierce soldiers?
They come right to our arms
To slit the throats of our sons, our friends!

Refrain:

Grab your weapons, citizens!
Form your battalions!
Let us march! Let us march!
May impure blood
Water our fields!

Verse 2:

This horde of slaves, traitors, plotting kings,
What do they want?
For whom these vile shackles,
These long-prepared irons? (repeat)
Frenchmen, for us, oh! what an insult!
What emotions that must excite!
It is us that they dare to consider
Returning to ancient slavery!

Verse 3:

Quoi ! ces cohortes étrangères
Feraient la loi dans nos foyers !
Quoi ! ces phalanges mercenaires
Terrasseraient nos fiers guerriers ! (bis)
Grand Dieu ! par des mains enchaînées
Nos fronts sous le joug se ploieraient !
De vils despotes deviendraient
Les maîtres de nos destinées !

Verse 4:

Tremblez, tyrans ! et vous, perfides,
L'opprobre de tous les partis,
Tremblez ! vos projets parricides
Vont enfin recevoir leur prix ! (bis)
Tout est soldat pour vous combattre,
S'ils tombent, nos jeunes héros,
La France en produit de nouveaux,
Contre vous tout prêts à se battre !

Verse 5:

Français, en guerriers magnanimes,
Portez ou retenez vos coups !
Épargnez ces tristes victimes,
A regret s'armant contre nous. (bis)
Mais ces despotes sanguinaires,
Mais ces complices de Bouillé,
Tous ces tigres qui, sans pitié,
Déchirent le sein de leur mère !

Verse 6:

Amour sacré de la patrie,
Conduis, soutiens nos bras vengeurs !
Liberté, Liberté chérie,
Combats avec tes défenseurs ! (bis)
Sous nos drapeaux, que la victoire
Accoure à tes mâles accents !
Que tes ennemis expirants
Voient ton triomphe et notre gloire !

Verse 7:

Nous entrerons dans la carrière
Quand nos aînés n'y seront plus ;
Nous y trouverons leur poussière
Et la trace de leurs vertus. (bis)
Bien moins jaloux de leur survivre
Que de partager leur cercueil,
Nous aurons le sublime orgueil
De les venger ou de les suivre !

Verse 3:

What! These foreign troops
Would make laws in our home!
What! These mercenary phalanxes
Would bring down our proud warriors! (repeat)
Good Lord! By chained hands
Our brows would bend beneath the yoke!
Vile despots would become
The masters of our fate!

Verse 4:

Tremble, tyrants! and you, traitors,
The disgrace of all groups,
Tremble! Your parricidal plans
Will finally pay the price! (repeat)
Everyone is a soldier to fight you,
If they fall, our young heroes,
France will make more,
Ready to battle you!

Verse 5:

Frenchmen, as magnanimous warriors,
Bear or hold back your blows!
Spare these sad victims,
Regretfully arming against us. (repeat)
But not these bloodthirsty despots,
But not these accomplices of Bouillé,
All of these animals who, without pity,
Tear their mother's breast to pieces!

Verse 6:

Sacred love of France,
Lead, support our avenging arms!
Liberty, beloved Liberty,
Fight with your defenders! (repeat)
Under our flags, let victory
Hasten to your manly tones!
May your dying enemies
See your triumph and our glory!

Verse 7:

We will enter the pit
When our elders are no longer there;
There, we will find their dust
And the traces of their virtues. (repeat)
Much less eager to outlive them
Than to share their casket,
We will have the sublime pride
Of avenging them or following them!

Songs imbued with Hope - popular with the Military

We'll Meet Again

Song by Vera Lynn

“

We'll meet again
Don't know where, don't know when
But I know we'll meet again
Some sunny day

Keep smiling through
Just like you always do
'Til the blue skies drive the dark clouds
Far away

So will you, please, say hello
To the folks that I know?
Tell them I won't be long
They'll be happy to know
That as you saw me go
I was singing this song

We'll meet again
Don't know where, don't know when
But I know we'll meet again
Some sunny day

We'll meet again
Don't know where, don't know when
But I know we'll meet again
Some sunny day

Keep smiling through
Just like you always do
'Til the blue skies drive the dark clouds
Far away

So will you, please, say hello
To the folks that I know?
Tell them I won't be long
They'll be happy to know
That as you saw me go
I was singing this song

We'll meet again
Don't know where, don't know when

But I know we'll meet again
Some sunny day.”

Keep Right On To The End Of The Road

Song by Harry Lauder

Every road through life is a long, long road
Filled with joys and sorrows too
As you journey on how your heart may yearn
For the things most dear to you

With wealth and love 'tis so
But onward we must go

Keep right on to the end of the road
Keep right on to the end
Though the way be long, let your heart be strong
Keep right on 'round the bend

If you're tired and weary, still journey on
'Til you come to your happy abode
Where all your love and your dreaming of
Will be there at the end of the road

With a big stout heart to a long steep hill
We may get there with a smile
With a good kind thought and an end in view
We can cut short many a mile

So let courage every day
Be your guiding star always

Keep right on to the end of the road
Keep right on to the end
Though the way be long, let your heart be strong
Keep right on 'round the bend

If you're tired and weary, still journey on
'Til you come to your happy abode
Where all your love and your dreaming of
Will be there at the end of the road.

Beer Barrel Polka
Song by Will Glahé

“There's a garden, what a garden
Only happy faces bloom there
And there's never any room there
For a worry or a gloom there

Oh there's music and there's dancing
And a lot of sweet romancing
When they play the polka
They all get in the swing

Every time they hear that oom-pa-pa
Everybody feels so tra-la-la
They want to throw their cares away
They all go lah-de-ah-de-ay

Then they hear a rumble on the floor, the floor
It's the big surprise they're waiting for
And all the couples form a ring
For miles around you'll hear them sing...

Roll out the barrel, we'll have a barrel of fun
Roll out the barrel, we've got the blues on the run
Zing boom tatarrel, ring out a song of good cheer
Now's the time to roll the barrel, for the gang's all here

Da-da-da-da, da-da-da-da, da-da-da-da-da-da-da-da-da
Then they hear a rumble on the floor-or-or-or
It's the big surprise they're waiting for
And all the couples they form a ring
For miles around you'll hear them sing

Drree mopado theedo da-da-da-da

Roll it out, roll it out, roll out the barrel
Da-da-da da-da da-da da-da-da-da-da
Sing a song of good cheer
'Cause the whole gang is here
Roll it out, roll it out
Let's do the beer barrel polka.”

Pack Up Your Troubles In Your Old Kit Bag And Smile, Smile, Smile

Song by The Andrews Sisters

“Pack up your troubles in your old kit bag

And smile, smile, smile.

Don't let your joy and laughter hear the snag

Smile boys, that's the style

What's the use of worrying

It never was worth while

So, pack up your troubles in your old kit bag

And smile, smile, smile.

Pack up your troubles in your old kit bag

And smile, smile, smile.

Just pucker up and whistle

What's the use of worrying

It never was worth while

So, pack up your troubles in your old kit bag

And smile, smile, smile.”

The White Cliffs of Dover

Song by Vera Lynn

“There'll be bluebirds over

The white cliffs of dover

Tomorrow

Just you wait and see

I'll never forget the people I met

Braving those angry skies

I remember well as the shadows fell

The light of hope in their eyes

And though I'm far away

I still can hear them say

Bombs up

But when the dawn comes up

There'll be bluebirds over

The white cliffs of dover

Tomorrow

Just you wait and see

There'll be love and laughter

And peace ever after

Tomorrow

When the world is free

The shepherd will tend his sheep
The valley will bloom again
And Jimmy will go to sleep
In his own little room again

There'll be bluebirds over
The white cliffs of dover
Tomorrow
Just you wait and see

There'll be bluebirds over
The white cliffs of dover
Tomorrow
Just you wait and see.”

Lili Marlene

Song by Marlene Dietrich

“In front of the barracks
Vor der Kaserne

In front of the big gate
Vor dem großen Tor

There was a lantern
Stand eine Laterne

And is she still there?
Und steht sie noch davor

So we want to see each other there again
So woll'n wir uns da wieder seh'n

We want to stand by the lantern
Bei der Laterne wollen wir steh'n

Like Lili Marleen once did.
Wie einst Lili Marleen.

Like Lili Marleen once did.
Wie einst Lili Marleen.

Our two shadows
Uns're beiden Schatten

Looked like one
Sah'n wie einer aus

That we loved each other so much
Daß wir so lieb uns hatten

You could see that straight away
Das sah man gleich daraus

And everyone should see it
Und alle Leute soll'n es seh'n

When we stand by the lantern
Wenn wir bei der Laterne steh'n

Like Lili Marleen once did.
Wie einst Lili Marleen.

Like Lili Marleen once did.
Wie einst Lili Marleen.

The guard was already calling
Schon rief der Posten

They blow tattoos
Sie blasen Zapfenstreich

It can take three days
Es kann drei Tage kosten

Comrade, I'll come straight away
Kam'rad, ich komm sogleich

Then we said goodbye
Da sagten wir auf Wiedersehen

How much I wanted to go with you
Wie gerne wollt ich mit dir geh'n

With you Lili Marleen.
Mit dir Lili Marleen.

With you Lili Marleen.
Mit dir Lili Marleen.

She knows your steps
Deine Schritte kennt sie

Your beautiful walk
Deinen schönen Gang

She burns every evening,
Alle Abend brennt sie,

But she forgot me for a long time
Doch mich vergaß sie lang

And if something bad happens to me
Und sollte mir ein Leids gescheh'n

Who will stand by the lantern
Wer wird bei der Laterne stehen

With you Lili Marleen?
Mit dir Lili Marleen?

With you Lili Marleen?
Mit dir Lili Marleen?

From the quiet room
Aus dem stillen Raume

From the ground
Aus der Erde Grund

Lifts me like in a dream
Hebt mich wie im Traume

Your mouth in love
Dein verliebter Mund

When the late mists turn
Wenn sich die späten Nebel drehn

I'll stand by the lantern
Werd' ich bei der Laterne steh'n

Like Lili Marleen once did.
Wie einst Lili Marleen.

Like Lili Marleen once did.
Wie einst Lili Marleen.”

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Schools

Eton College was founded in 1440 by Henry VI as “Kynge's College of Our Ladye of Eton besyde Windesore”.

Henry hoped his subjects would have the opportunities of gaining knowledge that he had enjoyed.

He made provision for 70 poor boys, known as King's Scholars, to be housed and educated at Eton free of charge.

Harrow School was founded by John Lyon, a land-owning farmer from the village of Preston in the London Borough of Brent.

In 1572, John Lyon was granted a Royal Charter by Queen Elizabeth I to endow a parish school in Harrow on the Hill as a free grammar school for 30 local boys. He hoped that these boys, though from poorer backgrounds, would do as well as those of Eton College.

Ampleforth College, founded in 1802 and set in a beautiful Yorkshire valley, is an invitation to young people to discover the value and the purpose of life, by entering into a transforming encounter with Christ through active participation in the life of a living Christian Community. The Benedictine monks hoped to educate fine human beings with a Catholic-Christian view on life.

Stonyhurst College. The story of the school – a story of hope - starts at St Omer in what was then the Spanish Low Countries in 1593, where a college was founded by Father Robert Parsons for English boys, unable to receive a Catholic education in Elizabethan England. As such it was one of a number of expatriate English schools operating on the European mainland during the centuries when Catholicism was proscribed in England.

In 1762, when the French *Parlement* turned against the Jesuits, the school, in what was then a part of France, was forced to move. During subsequent decades, when the Jesuit Order was suppressed in most countries, the college was one of the institutions through which it managed to maintain a continuous existence.

After St Omer (still known in Stonyhurst parlance by its old English name of St. Omers), the college settled in Bruges where it continued until 1773 when it was again forced to move, reassembling at Liège, under the protection of its bishop.

In 1794 yet another move was forced upon the school, and a new home was found at Stonyhurst Hall in Lancashire, an ideal county for the school to settle in because it was still a Catholic stronghold and its rural, isolated character provided the hope that the school would be left alone by the authorities.

Not taking any chances however, a number of hiding places were created throughout the building should the Jesuits face persecution again, and when Saint Mary's Hall was

constructed in the following century, a secret escape tunnel, which still survives, was also built linking the seminary to an exit in the gardens.

The honour of being the last student at Liège and the first at Stonyhurst was claimed by a George Lambert Clifford whose bust is today on display in the Do Room. It is recorded that he and a fellow pupil from Liège, Charles Brooke, were the first of the migrants to arrive at the Stonyhurst mansion and raced down the Avenue together, but whilst his antagonist was waiting to be let in, Clifford spotted an open window and darted in, to be remembered by posterity as Stonyhurst's first pupil. He hoped to be the first and he was.

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Football

Many of the UK's best football clubs were Church foundation. The church – mainly non-catholic, apart from Celtic in Glasgow - hoped their club would help its members become better humans.

There has been an extremely long history of the involvement of Christianity and association football. In 16th-century England, Puritan Christians opposed the contemporary forms of football, due to its violence and its practice on Sunday, the Sabbath day of rest.

'Muscular Christianity' was a term invented in England in 1857 to describe those Christians who saw moral, religious and social value in sports - *mens sana in corpore sano* - and who argued that churches could and should promote this. Similar ideas developed in the United States about the same time. They hoped the clubs would improve physical health and social cohesion.

Following the formation of The Football Association in England, a number of football clubs were founded by churches.

Everton Football Club were founded in 1879 at St. Domingo's Methodist Church. The Reverend Ben Chambers was an advocate of Muscular Christianity, hoping to encourage healthy minds and healthy bodies.

Fulham St Andrew's Church Sunday School F.C., to later become Fulham F.C., was founded by members of the nearby Church of England church for members of the Sunday school with the same focus as Everton of advocating Muscular Christianity.

In November 1880, St. Mark's Anglican Church in West Gorton, inspired by the same ideology and to win young men back to the church, set up a football team which later became Manchester City F.C.

St. Mary's Church, Southampton set up a team in 1885, which later became Southampton Football Club.

On 6 November 1887, the Celtic Football Club was founded at the Catholic St. Mary's Church Hall in Calton, hoping to fight poverty in East Glasgow.

Manchester City are, currently, doing rather well:

22-23 FA Cup winner; 23/24 Premier league champions, FA Cup runner Up and UEFA Supercup Winner.

Hoping will make a difference to the successes of their team, football clubs pay vast sums of money for top players.

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Politicians, in the hope of being elected declare their aims, their hopes for the future. Hitler hoped to start a Thousand Year Reich. Thank God his delusions brought it to its end in 1945.

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Prince Albert(11819-1861) hoped to improve of humanitarianism through moderate reform. He spoke out against slavery and child labour, and was instrumental in securing the abolition of duelling between Army officers.

He had high hopes for the Great Exhibition, stating that its aim was the unity of mankind. Indeed, during a speech in March 1850 he said that. “ The exhibition of 1851 is to give us a true test and a living picture of the point of development at which the whole of mankind has arrived in this great task, and a new starting point from which all nations will be able to direct their further exertions...”

Queen Victoria opened the Great Exhibition on 1st May 1851. People could see art, musical instruments, precious jewels, and inventions from over 25 different countries. The world's largest diamond called the Kohinoor was on show. There were over 8 miles of displays.

The Great Exhibition was a runaway success both with the public, and financially. And its legacy lives on. Prince Albert insisted that part of the profits was used to establish some of London's best-loved museums: the Science Museum, the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Natural History Museum.

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Andre Rieux(born 1949), the “King of the Waltz” has said that he hopes he and his Johann Strauss Orchestra will make people happier, more united and, even in some cases, healthier. Rieu and his orchestra have turned classical and waltz music into a worldwide concert touring act. Great on TV for dementia suffers as there is no plot to follow; just beautiful sounds and visuals to enjoy.

Bloodstock

Owners and breeders of race-horses, in the hope of achieving brilliant results, are prepared to pay vast sums of money. Look at these three!

1. Fusaichi Pegasus – \$70 million (2000)

Fusaichi Pegasus, the legendary Thoroughbred, galloped his way into history with a stellar racing career highlighted by his 2000 Kentucky Derby victory. His record-breaking purchase price of \$70 million cemented his status as the most expensive horse ever sold, capturing the world's attention. With triumphs at prestigious races like the Irish Derby and the Dubai World Cup, Fusaichi Pegasus set new standards of excellence on the racetrack.

Even in retirement, his legacy endures through his off-springs, including notable Grade 1 winners like Bandini, Roman Ruler, Champ Pegasus, and Haradasun. His name, a fusion of owner Fusao Sekiguchi's name and a Greek mythological figure symbolises his enduring influence in the world of horse racing.

2. Justify – \$60 million (2018)

Justify's price tag of \$60 million at auction was a testament to his extraordinary racing achievements and impeccable bloodline. As a Triple Crown winner in 2018, he joined an elite group of only 13 horses in history to accomplish this feat. What made Justify's victory even more remarkable was his short racing career, starting only in February of that year. With a sire famed for speed and a proven dam, Justify's genetics were highly coveted by breeders, driving up his value. Moreover, his unbeaten record and early retirement made him a prized asset in the world of horse racing and breeding.

3. Shareef Dancer – \$40 million (1983)

Shareef Dancer, a British and American-bred racehorse, achieved legendary status in 1983 when he was sold for a record-breaking \$40 million, a testament to his exceptional lineage as a descendant of the famous Northern Dancer. This historic sale underscored the global influence of the horse racing industry. Shareef Dancer lived up to his lofty price tag by becoming one of the most illustrious racehorses of his time, clinching victories in prestigious events like the 1985 Breeders' Cup Mile and the Grade 1 Metropolitan Handicap. His legacy endured through his successful offspring, including Bet Twice, the winner of the 1987 Belmont Stakes.

If successful, the owners – often a consortium – can get their money back.

Frankel is a retired champion British Thoroughbred racehorse and current sire. He was unbeaten in his fourteen-race career and was the highest-rated racehorse in the world from May 2011. He was trained by Henry Cecil in Newmarket and ridden in all his races by Tom Queally.

Super-stallion Frankel's stud fee has rocketed to a world-record figure - after he raked in more than £67million this year. The horse considered by many to be the greatest of all time will charge £350,000 for a single covering of a mare - £90,000 more than the average cost of a UK house – and cover two mares a day.

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God's Grandeur – like the Resurrection – encourages our hope.
Certainly mine.

The world is charged with the grandeur of God.
It will flame out, like shining from shook foil;
It gathers to a greatness, like the ooze of oil
Crushed. Why do men then now not reck his rod?
Generations have trod, have trod, have trod;
And all is seared with trade; bleared, smeared with toil;
And wears man's smudge and shares man's smell: the soil
Is bare now, nor can foot feel, being shod.

And for all this, nature is never spent;
There lives the dearest freshness deep down things;
And though the last lights off the black West went
Oh, morning, at the brown brink eastward, springs —
Because the Holy Ghost over the bent
World broods with warm breast and with ah! bright wings.

Gerard Manley Hopkins SJ (1844-1889)

9. Prayer

A great prayer of hope is the 'Hail Mary', with its ending, "pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death."

My prayer – as my masses – tend, apart from my conversations with *Yesh* about life and reality, to be coalesced around the TAPS.

I Thank God because I hope that all I am is a gift from God.

I Ask God for what I hope I – and those I love (including the whole world!, a gift from God) – need.

I praise God for the beauty of creation – which encourages my hope.

Sorry – Forgiveness. My Caroline and Luke story.

Around the mid-80s I used to stay for my R&R in a small farmhouse near St Keverne, Cornwall.

One sunny afternoon, standing with her in her kitchen and talking about her previous life, Caroline said she felt deeply guilty about so many things in her life.

I said "Stop worrying. If you are sorry God forgives you." She would have none of that

Caroline knew - as I knew - she had never satisfied her father and was often criticised for her life-style]

Then her four-year old son Luke, who had been playing in the farmyard, suddenly burst into the kitchen.

No idea - at the time - where it came from, but I blurted out:” But you forgive Luke!”

Caroline replied – the words are indelibly etched into me memory; ”Of course I forgive Luke everything. I am completely responsible for him. Without me, he would not be here.”

Then a lovely smile spread across her face. Caroline was – and probably still is – I lost contact many years ago – no fool.

Whenever I use this story, I add: "And God is even better than Caroline.”

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Mistakes - erroneous or disappointed hopes, once admitted are - as we read in the Prodigal Son (actually ‘Prodigal Father’ is a better title) parable (Lk 15,11-32) are pardoned by God.

Whenever we act, we hope to achieve something. When we fail, we say we made a mistake, we experience hope-failure. Thank God for the Sacrament of Reconciliation!

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A few quotes on mistakes. As you read them, how do they strike you, Dear Reader,

Anyone who has never made a mistake has never tried anything new. *Albert Einstein.*(1879-1955)

Mistakes are a part of being human. Appreciate your mistakes for what they are: precious life lessons that can only be learned the hard way. Unless it’s a fatal mistake, which, at least, others can learn from. *Al Franken* (an American politician and comedian who served as a United States senator from Minnesota from 2009 to 2018.).

Be not ashamed of mistakes and thus make them crimes. *Confucius.*(551-479 BCE)

We must not say every mistake is a foolish one. *Cicero.* (106-43BCE)

Laughing at our mistakes can lengthen our own life. Laughing at someone else’s can shorten it. *Cullen Hightower* ([1923 – November 27, 2008] a well-known quotation and quip writer from the United States.)

Instruction does not prevent wasted time or mistakes; and mistakes themselves are often the best teachers of all. *James Anthony Froude* ([1818-94], an English historian, novelist, biographer, and editor of Fraser's Magazine.)

Just because you make a mistake doesn’t mean you are a mistake. *Georgette Mosbacher* (born 1947, a former owner of La Prairie Cosmetics and current CEO of Georgette Mosbacher Enterprises, Inc. The author of ‘Feminie Force’, she lives in New York City.

Experience is simply the name we give our mistakes. *Oscar Wilde.* (1854-1900)

Acknowledge that you failed, draw your lessons from it, and use it to your advantage to make sure it never happens again. *Michael Johnson* (born 1967, one of the greatest sprinters of all time.)

As an inventor, Thomas Edison (1847-1931) made 1,000 unsuccessful attempts at inventing the light bulb. When a reporter asked, "How did it feel to fail 1,000 times?" Edison replied, "I didn't fail 1,000 times. The light bulb was an invention with 1,000 steps."

Remember dear reader, 'the past is a reader, the past is a rehearsal for the present'.

Many saints - St John of the Cross and St Mother Theresa of Calcutta jump into my mind - have suffered the dark night of the soul where hope is not a feeling, merely the stubborn commitment to God who 'used to be there'.

People experience intense emotions that seem to come from the depths of their being. They find grappling with extreme sadness, a type of sorrow that feels all-encompassing.

Confusion is another hallmark of this phase. People may question their life choices, beliefs, and even their sense of self. Anger, too, can surface during this time.

A common symptom is fatigue; a deep, bone-weary exhaustion that doesn't always go away with rest. Lives feel drained without any apparent reason.

As Winston Churchill put it, "If you are going through hell, keep going.". Hoping you will eventually exit that hell.

On May 10, 1940, Winston Churchill became Prime Minister. When he met his Cabinet on May 13 he told them that "I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears and sweat." He repeated that phrase later in the day when he asked the House of Commons for a vote of confidence in his new all-party government. The response of Labour was heart-warming; the Conservative reaction was lukewarm. They still really wanted Neville Chamberlain.

For the first time, the people had hope but Churchill commented to General Ismay: "Poor people, poor people. They trust me, and I can give them nothing but disaster for quite a long time."

Thank God Churchill had – and knew how to communicate - hope.

To end this section, a few songs and hymns of hope.

"Raise A Hallelujah" by Bethel Music

Lyrics include, "*Up from the ashes, hope will arise. Death is defeated, the King is alive.*"

"Living Hope" by Phil Wickham

Including, "*Then through the darkness. Your loving kindness. Tore through the shadows of my soul.*"

"I Will Rise" by Chris Tomlin

Including, "*And the shadows disappear. And my faith shall be my eyes.*"

"All My Hope" by Crowder

Including, "God, I've been broken more than a time or two, yes, Lord. Then He picked me up. And showed me what it means to be a man. Come on and sing."

"It Is Well With My Soul" by Horatio Spafford

Including, "But, Lord, 'tis for Thee, for Thy coming we wait. The sky, not the grave, is our goal; Oh, trump of the angel! Oh, voice of the Lord! Blessed hope, blessed rest of my soul!"

"I'll Fly Away" by Albert E. Brumley

Including "I'll fly away to a home on God's celestial shore."

"How Great Thou Art" by Carrie Underwood.

Oh Lord, my God

When I, in awesome wonder

Consider all the worlds Thy hands have made

I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder

Thy power throughout the universe displayed

Then sings my soul, my Saviour God to Thee

How great Thou art, how great Thou art

Then sings my soul, my Saviour God to Thee

How great Thou art, how great Thou art

And when I think that God, His Son not sparing

Sent Him to die, I scarce can take it in

That on the cross, my burden gladly bearing

He bled and died to take away my sin

Then sings my soul, my Saviour God to Thee

How great Thou art, how great Thou art

Then sings my soul, my Saviour God to Thee

How great Thou art, how great Thou art

When Christ shall come, with shout of acclamation

And take me home, what joy shall fill my heart

Then I shall bow, in humble adoration

And then proclaim, my God, how great Thou art

Then sings my soul, my Saviour God to Thee

How great Thou art, how great Thou art

Then sings my soul, my Saviour God to Thee

How great Thou art, how great Thou art

How great Thou art, how great Thou art.

“Christ, Be Our Light” by Bernadette Farrell.

In deepest night, shadows are lifted
Now let your servant go forth in peace
Your Word fulfilled, your promise honoured
Love that will never cease!

Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts
Shine through the darkness
Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church gathered today

With our own eyes, we see salvation
Within our hearts, we are set free
Your Word made flesh, hope of the nations
Light for the world to see!

Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts
Shine through the darkness
Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church gathered today

Christ, be our hope! Christ, be our purpose!
Christ, be our vision, radiant and bright!
Christ, be our Way, shatt'ring our blindness
Gifting us with your sight!

Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts
Shine through the darkness
Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church gathered today

Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts
Shine through the darkness
Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church gathered today.

10. Holiness

Cardinal Basil Hume, uncle George to his family, in his book "Light in the world", states that holy people have three qualities.

“They discovered God's love and responded to it.

The second is that they have unbounded confidence in God and his providence.
Thirdly, they have a certain positive zest for life.

They are never bored, never cynical, never unkind, never bigotedly critical.

In sum, they live in and by hope.” They are Hope incarnate.

Having read many books about the saints, it was a delight to share the life of a living saint. For that, I am sure, Uncle George was.

Well informed about politics, the judiciary and life in the UK, and knowing close-up life within The Vatican. He never lost hope. As we have seen, he hoped in me. He helped to keep my hope adamant. No matter what.

In the language of signing for deaf folk, there are two signs representing hope. Secular hope is ‘fingers crossed’.

Liturgical/theological hope is shown by catching the signer’s breath as it comes out of her or his mouth. The breath is The Holy Spirit.

Pope Gregory I (Latin: *Gregorius I*; c. 540 – 12 March 604), commonly known as Saint Gregory the Great, was the 64th Bishop of Rome from 3 September 590 to his death.) was a man with hope.

According to St Bede the Venerable (born 672/673, traditionally Monkton in Jarrow, Northumbria, England - died May 25, 735) , "It is said that one day, when some merchants had lately arrived at Rome, many things were exposed for sale in the market place, and much people resorted thither to buy: Gregory himself went with the rest, and saw among other wares some boys put up for sale, of fair complexion, with pleasing countenances, and very beautiful hair.

When he beheld them, he asked, it is said, from what region or country they were brought? and was told, from the island of Britain, and that the inhabitants were like that in appearance. He again inquired whether those islanders were Christians, or still involved in the errors of paganism, and was informed that they were pagans.

Then fetching a deep sigh from the bottom of his heart, “Alas! what pity,” said he, “that the author of darkness should own men of such fair countenances; and that with such grace of outward form, their minds should be void of inward grace.”

He therefore again asked, what was the name of that nation? and was answered, that they were called Angles. “Right,” said he, “for they have an angelic face, and it is meet that such should be co-heirs with the Angels in heaven.” Hence the quote, attributed to Gregory, “*non angli sed angeli*” was born.

Through this encounter the Holy Spirit - as we can see on the reredos of St Gregory’s chapel in Westminster Cathedral – inspired Gregory to send missionaries to England to teach and spread The Gospel.

St. Jude - also known as Thaddeus - the Patron Saint of Hope and impossible causes and one of Jesus' original twelve Apostles, preached the Gospel with great passion, often in the most difficult circumstances. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, he made profound differences in people's lives as he offered them the Word of God.

Legend has it that St. Jude was born into a Jewish family in Paneas, a town in the Galilee portion of ancient Palestine. He probably spoke Greek and Aramaic. Like many of his contemporaries in that area, he was a farmer by trade.

Jude was described by St. Matthew (13:55) as being one of the “brethren” of Jesus. The Hebrew word for “brethren” indicates a blood relationship of some sort. Jude’s mother, Mary, was referred to as a cousin of Jesus’ mother Mary, while his father, Cleophas, was the brother of St. Joseph. Jude had several brothers, including St. James, who was another of the original Apostles. His own first name, “Jude”, means giver of joy, while “Thaddeus”, another name he was called, means generous and kind.

He was later married, had at least one child, and there are references to his grandchildren living as late as 95CE.

St. Jude, tradition has it, went to Mesopotamia (present-day Iraq) around 37CE., and became a leader of the Church of the East that St. Thomas established there.

St. Jude was a true internationalist, traveling throughout Mesopotamia, Libya, Turkey, and Persia with St. Simon, preaching and converting many people to Christianity. He was credited with helping the early creation of the Armenian Church, and other places beyond the borders of the Roman Empire.

Around the year 60CE., St. Jude wrote a Gospel letter to recent Christian converts in Eastern churches who were under persecution. In it, he warned them against the pseudo-teachers of the day who were spreading false ideas about the early Christian faith. He encouraged them to persevere in the face of the harsh, difficult circumstances they were in, just as their forefathers had done before them. He exhorted them to keep their faith and to stay in the love of God as they had been taught. His inspirational support of these early believers led to him becoming the patron saint of desperate cases.

He is believed to have been martyred in Persia or Syria around 65CE.

The axe or club that he is often shown holding in pictures symbolizes the way in which he was killed. His body was brought back to Rome and was placed in a crypt beneath St. Peter’s Basilica - which people visit to this day.

The female saint of hope is Saint Sophia of Rome (date of birth unknown, died 304CE), venerated as a Christian martyr. She is identified in hagiographical tradition with the figure of Sophia of Milan, the mother of Saints Faith, Hope and Charity, whose veneration is attested for the sixth century.



In 595ce, Gregory chose Augustine, prior of Gregory's own monastery of St Andrew in Rome, to head the mission to Kent. Gregory selected monks to accompany Augustine and sought support from the Frankish kings

Thus, a reluctant Augustine (St Augustine of Canterbury, born early 6th century, probably in Italy. Died probably 26th May 664, Canterbury, Kingdom of Kent.) travelled across France to Anglo-Saxon England. Christianity had arrived in Kent. The mission was successful, and it was from England that missionaries later set out for the Netherlands and Germany. Papal Hope fulfilled.

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A hope-filled poem

My heart leaps up when I behold
A rainbow in the sky:
So was it when my life began;
So is it now I am a man;
So be it when I shall grow old,
Or let me die!
The Child is father of the Man;
And I could wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety.
William Wordsworth (1770-1850)

A hope-filled hymn

He who would valiant be 'gainst all disaster,
Let him in constancy follow the Master.
There's no discouragement shall make him once relent
His first avowed intent to be a pilgrim.

Who so beset him round with dismal stories
Do but themselves confound—his strength the more is.
No foes shall stay his might; though he with giants fight,
He will make good his right to be a pilgrim.

Since, Lord, Thou dost defend us with Thy Spirit,
We know we at the end, shall life inherit.
Then fancies flee away! I'll fear not what men say,
I'll labour night and day to be a pilgrim.
John Bunyan (1628-88)

Hope in nature – and technology.



A couple of poems that tackle the virtue of hope.

Nature – if we look at it and ponder – raises our heart with hope.

Morning has broken,
Like the first morning,
Blackbird has spoken
Like the first bird;
Praise for the singing,
Praise for the morning,
Praise for them springing
Fresh from the Word.

Sweet the rain's new fall,
Sunlit from heaven,
Like the first dewfall
On the first grass;
Praise for the sweetness,
Of the wet garden,
Sprung in completeness
Where His feet pass.

Mine is the sunlight,
Mine is the morning,
Born of the one light
Eden saw play;
Praise with elation,
Praise every morning,
God's re-creation
Of the new day.

Eleanor Farjeon(1881-1965)

As you will have seen, I look forward to my death and hence my birth into divine eternity. Frye seems to share my conviction when she wrote:

“Do not stand at my grave and weep
I am not there. I do not sleep.

I am a thousand winds that blow.
I am the diamond glints on snow.
I am the sunlight on ripened grain.
I am the gentle autumn rain.

When you awaken in the morning's hush
I am the swift uplifting rush
Of quiet birds in circled flight.
I am the soft stars that shine at night.

Do not stand at my grave and cry;
I am not there. I did not die.”

Mary Elizabeth Frye(USA 1905-2004)

The first verse of a poem by Thomas Babington Macaulay (1800-59) inspired me - and I etched it into my memory - when, aged ten, I read it at St Peter's School, Marrow. (I changed the last line to 'and the glory of his God.')

“Then out spake brave Horatius,
The Captain of the gate:
‘To every man upon this earth
Death cometh soon or late.
And how can man die better
Than facing fearful odds,
For the ashes of his fathers,
And the temples of his Gods,

‘And for the tender mother
Who dandled him to rest,
And for the wife who nurses
His baby at her breast,
And for the holy maidens
Who feed the eternal flame,
To save them from false Sextus
That wrought the deed of shame?

‘Hew down the bridge, Sir Consul,
With all the speed ye may;
I, with two more to help me,
Will hold the foe in play.
In yon strait path a thousand
May well be stopped by three.
Now who will stand on either hand,
And keep the bridge with me?

Then out spake Spurius Lartius;
A Ramnian proud was he:
‘Lo, I will stand at thy right hand,
And keep the bridge with thee.’
And out spake strong Herminius;
Of Titian blood was he:
‘I will abide on thy left side,
And keep the bridge with thee.’

‘Horatius,’ quoth the Consul,
‘As thou sayest, so let it be.’
And straight against that great array
Forth went the dauntless Three.
For Romans in Rome’s quarrel
Spared neither land nor gold,
Nor son nor wife, nor limb nor life,
In the brave days of old.

Then none was for a party;
Then all were for the state;

Then the great man helped the poor,
And the poor man loved the great:
Then lands were fairly portioned;
Then spoils were fairly sold:
The Romans were like brothers
In the brave days of old.”
(The last stanza I left out as it is rather negative)

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The feet on which my hope stands firm is the fact that God will never abandon me, no matter what - as set out in this fine poem which, while still at Imperial College, I came across at the Catholic University Chaplaincy.

The Hound Of Heaven

By Francis Thompson (1890)

I fled Him, down the nights and down the days;
I fled Him, down the arches of the years;
I fled Him, down the labyrinthine ways
Of my own mind; and in the mist of tears
I hid from Him, and under running laughter.
Up vistaed hopes I sped;
And shot, precipitated,
Adown Titanic glooms of chasmèd fears,
From those strong Feet that followed, followed after.
But with unhurrying chase,
And unperturbèd pace,
Deliberate speed, majestic instancy,
They beat—and a Voice beat
More instant than the Feet—
‘All things betray thee, who betrayest Me.’
I pleaded, outlaw-wise,
By many a hearted casement, curtained red,
Trellised with intertwining charities;
(For, though I knew His love Who followèd,
Yet was I sore adread
Lest having Him, I must have naught beside).
But, if one little casement parted wide,
The gust of His approach would clash it to.
Fear wist not to evade, as Love wist to pursue.
Across the margent of the world I fled,
And troubled the gold gateways of the stars,

Smiting for shelter on their clangèd bars;
Fretted to dulcet jars
And silvern chatter the pale ports o' the moon.
I said to Dawn: Be sudden—to Eve: Be soon;
With thy young skiey blossoms heap me over
From this tremendous Lover—
Float thy vague veil about me, lest He see!
I tempted all His servitors, but to find
My own betrayal in their constancy,
In faith to Him their fickleness to me,
Their traitorous trueness, and their loyal deceit.
To all swift things for swiftness did I sue;
Clung to the whistling mane of every wind.
But whether they swept, smoothly fleet,
The long savannahs of the blue;
Or whether, Thunder-driven,
They clangèd his chariot 'thwart a heaven,
Plashy with flying lightnings round the spurn o' their
feet:—
Fear wist not to evade as Love wist to pursue.
Still with unhurrying chase,
And unperturbèd pace,
Deliberate speed, majestic instancy,
Came on the following Feet,
And a Voice above their beat—
'Naught shelters thee, who wilt not shelter Me.'

I sought no more that after which I strayed
In face of man or maid;
But still within the little children's eyes
Seems something, something that replies;
They at least are for me, surely for me!
I turned me to them very wistfully;
But just as their young eyes grew sudden fair
With dawning answers there,
Their angel plucked them from me by the hair.
'Come then, ye other children, Nature's—share
With me' (said I) 'your delicate fellowship;
Let me greet you lip to lip,
Let me twine with you caresses,

Wantoning
With our Lady-Mother's vagrant tresses,
Banqueting
With her in her wind-walled palace,
Underneath her azured daïs,
Quaffing, as your taintless way is,
From a chalice
Lucent-weeping out of the dayspring.'
So it was done:
I in their delicate fellowship was one—
Drew the bolt of Nature's secrecies.
I knew all the swift importings
On the wilful face of skies;
I knew how the clouds arise
Spumèd of the wild sea-snortings;
All that's born or dies
Rose and drooped with; made them shapers
Of mine own moods, or wailful or divine;
With them joyed and was bereaven.
I was heavy with the even,
When she lit her glimmering tapers
Round the day's dead sanctities.
I laughed in the morning's eyes.

I triumphed and I saddened with all weather,
Heaven and I wept together,
And its sweet tears were salt with mortal mine;
Against the red throb of its sunset-heart
I laid my own to beat,
And share commingling heat;
But not by that, by that, was eased my human smart.
In vain my tears were wet on Heaven's gray cheek.
For ah! we know not what each other says,
These things and I; in sound I speak—
Their sound is but their stir, they speak by silences.
Nature, poor stepdame, cannot slake my drouth;
Let her, if she would owe me,
Drop yon blue bosom-veil of sky, and show me
The breasts o' her tenderness:
Never did any milk of hers once bless

My thirsting mouth.
Nigh and nigh draws the chase,
With unperturbèd pace,
Deliberate speed, majestic instancy;
And past those noisèd Feet
A voice comes yet more fleet—
'Lo! naught contents thee, who content'st
not Me.'

Naked I wait Thy love's uplifted stroke!
My harness piece by piece Thou hast hewn from me,
And smitten me to my knee;
I am defenceless utterly.
I slept, methinks, and woke,
And, slowly gazing, find me stripped in sleep.
In the rash lustihead of my young powers,
I shook the pillaring hours
And pulled my life upon me; grimed with smears,
I stand amid the dust o' the mounded years—
My mangled youth lies dead beneath the heap.
My days have crackled and gone up in smoke,
Have puffed and burst as sun-starts on a stream.
Yea, faileth now even dream
The dreamer, and the lute the lutanist;
Even the linked fantasies, in whose blossomy twist
I swung the earth a trinket at my wrist,
Are yielding; cords of all too weak account
For earth with heavy griefs so overplussed.
Ah! is Thy love indeed
A weed, albeit an amaranthine weed,
Suffering no flowers except its own to mount?
Ah! must—
Designer infinite!—
Ah! must Thou char the wood ere Thou canst limn
with it?
My freshness spent its wavering shower i' the dust;
And now my heart is as a broken fount,
Wherein tear-drippings stagnate, spilt down ever
From the dank thoughts that shiver
Upon the sighful branches of my mind.

Such is; what is to be?
The pulp so bitter, how shall taste the rind?
I dimly guess what Time in mists confounds;
Yet ever and anon a trumpet sounds
From the hid battlements of Eternity;
Those shaken mists a space unsettle, then
Round the half-glimpsèd turrets slowly wash again.
But not ere him who summoneth
I first have seen, enwound
With glooming robes purpureal, cypress-crowned;
His name I know, and what his trumpet saith.
Whether man's heart or life it be which yields
Thee harvest, must Thy harvest-fields
Be dunged with rotten death?

Now of that long pursuit
Comes on at hand the bruit;
That Voice is round me like a bursting sea:
'And is thy earth so marred,
Shattered in shard on shard?
Lo, all things fly thee, for thou fliest Me!
Strange, piteous, futile thing!
Wherefore should any set thee love apart?
Seeing none but I makes much of naught' (He said),
'And human love needs human meriting:
How hast thou merited—
Of all man's clotted clay the dingiest clot?
Alack, thou knowest not
How little worthy of any love thou art!
Whom wilt thou find to love ignoble thee,
Save Me, save only Me?
All which I took from thee I did but take,
Not for thy harms,
But just that thou might'st seek it in My arms.
All which thy child's mistake
Fancies as lost, I have stored for thee at home:
Rise, clasp My hand, and come!'
Halts by me that footfall:
Is my gloom, after all,
Shade of His hand, outstretched caressingly?

‘Ah, fondest, blindest, weakest,
I am He Whom thou seekest!
Thou dravest love from thee, who dravest Me.’

Francis Thompson (1859–1907)

For me, this poem beautifully expresses how God is always seeking us -and waiting for a response from us – no matter what. God who is love, is truly the hound of heaven.

As we come towards the end of these musings on hope, a few quotes from famous folk on Hope.

"Hope is being able to see that there is light despite all of the darkness." - Desmond Tutu (1931-2021)

"We must accept finite disappointment, but never lose infinite hope." - Martin Luther King, Jr (1929-68).

“When you’re at the end of your rope, tie a knot and hold on.” - Theodore Roosevelt(1858-1919)

“It’s always something, to know you’ve done the most you could. But don’t leave off hoping, or it’s of no use doing anything. Hope, hope to the last.” - Charles Dickens(1812-70)

“You may not always have a comfortable life and you will not always be able to solve all of the world’s problems at once but don’t ever underestimate the importance you can have, because history has shown us that courage can be contagious, and hope can take on a life of its own.” - Michelle Obama(born 1964)

“To live without hope is to cease to live.” - Fyodor Dostoyevsky (1821-81).

Joyful Hope in poetry and music

"Ode to Joy" (German: "An die Freude") was written in the summer of 1785 by German poet, playwright, and historian Friedrich Schiller. It was published the following year in the German magazine *Thalia*. In 1808, a slightly revised version changed two lines of the first stanza and omitted last stanza.

"Ode to Joy" is best known for its use by Ludwig van Beethoven in the final (fourth) movement of his Ninth Symphony, completed in 1824.

Beethoven's text is not based entirely on Schiller's poem, and it introduces a few new sections. Beethoven's melody, but not Schiller's text, was adopted as the "Anthem of Europe" by the Council of Europe in 1972 and later by the European Union. Rhodesia's national anthem from 1974 until 1979, "Rise, O Voices of Rhodesia", also used Beethoven's melody.

An die Freude

Freude, schöner Götterfunken,
Tochter aus Elysium,
Wir betreten feuertrunken,
Himmlische, dein Heiligtum!
Deine Zauber binden wieder
Was die Mode streng geteilt;*
Alle Menschen werden Brüder*
Wo dein sanfter Flügel weilt.

Wem der große Wurf gelungen
Eines Freundes Freund zu sein;
Wer ein holdes Weib errungen
Mische seinen Jubel ein!
Ja, wer auch nur eine Seele
Sein nennt auf dem Erdenrund!
Und wer's nie gekonnt, der stehle
Weinend sich aus diesem Bund!

Freude trinken alle Wesen
An den Brüsten der Natur;
Alle Guten, alle Bösen
Folgen ihrer Rosenspur.
Küsse gab sie uns und Reben,
Einen Freund, geprüft im Tod;
Wollust ward dem Wurm gegeben
und der Cherub steht vor Gott.

Froh, wie seine Sonnen fliegen
Durch des Himmels prächt'gen Plan
Laufet, Brüder, eure Bahn,
Freudig, wie ein Held zum Siegen.

Seid umschlungen, Millionen!
Diesen Kuß der ganzen Welt!
Brüder, über'm Sternenzelt
Muß ein lieber Vater wohnen.
Ihr stürzt nieder, Millionen?
Ahnest du den Schöpfer, Welt?
Such' ihn über'm Sternenzelt!
Über Sternen muß er wohnen!

Ode to Joy

Joy, thou shining spark of God,
Daughter of Elysium,
With fiery rapture, goddess,
We approach thy shrine!
Your magic reunites those
Whom stern custom has parted;*
All men will become brothers*
Under your protective wing.

Let the man who has had the fortune
To be a helper to his friend,
And the man who has won a noble woman,
Join in our chorus of jubilation!
Yes, even if he holds but one soul
As his own in all the world!
But let the man who knows nothing of this
Steal away alone and in sorrow.

All the world's creatures draw
Draughts of joy from nature;
Both the just and the unjust
Follow in her gentle footsteps.
She gave us kisses and wine
And a friend loyal unto death;
She gave the joy of life to the lowliest,
And to the angels who dwell with God.

Joyous, as His suns speed
Through the glorious order of Heaven,
Hasten, brothers, on your way
Exultant as a knight victorious.

Be embraced, all ye millions!
With a kiss for all the world!
Brothers, beyond the stars
Surely dwells a loving Father.
Do you kneel before Him, oh millions?
Do you feel the Creator's presence?
Seek Him beyond the stars!
He must dwell beyond the stars.^[4]

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Fascinating how different people see hope. Emily Dickinson(1830-86), an American poet, little-known during her life, but now regarded as one of the most important figures in American poetry, could write:

"'Hope' is the thing with feathers
That perches in the soul
And sings the tune without the words
And never stops at all
And sweetest in the Gale is heard
And sore must be the storm
That could abash the little bird
That kept so many warm
I've heard it in the chillest land
And on the strangest sea
Yet, never, in extremity,
It asked a crumb of me."

+++

For me, "Nessun dorma" from Turandot by Giacomo Puccini (1858-1924) – the last aria he wrote before he died – is, for me, an expression of hope. 'In spite of everything, I shall win. That is my hope.'

Nobody sleeps
Nessun dorma

Nobody sleeps
Nessun dorma

You too, or Princess
Tu pure, o Principessa

In your cold room
Nella tua fredda stanza

Look at the stars
Guardi le stelle

Who tremble with love
Che tremano d'amore

And of hope
E di Speranza

But my mystery is closed within me
Ma il mio mistero è chiuso in me

No one will know my name, no, no

Il nome mio nessun saprà, no, no

In your mouth I will say it
Sulla tua bocca lo dirò

When the light shines
Quando la luce splenderà

And my kiss will melt
Ed il mio bacio scioglierà

The silence that makes you mine
Il silenzio che ti fa mia

(No one will know his name
(Il nome suo nessun saprà

And we must, alas, die, die)
E noi dovrem, ahimè, morir, morir)

Disappear, oh night
Dilegua, o notte

Set, stars
Tramontate, stelle

Set, stars
Tramontate, stelle

At dawn I will win
All'alba vincerò

I will win
Vincerò

I will win
Vincerò”

As I write, I saw in the newspaper a heart-warming - hope nourishing – moment when a Kings Guard moves his horse closer to a disabled woman so it can nuzzle her face. Videoed, it received massive praise in social media after a string of ugly incidents with other tourists this year.

Many have praised the soldier's 'compassion and respect' for disabled tourist

Other spectators have recently been injured after getting too close to horses

An additional warning to tourists requests that people do not touch the animals.

This soldier, however, appears to notice the woman, who is in a wheelchair and briefly nods to her in acknowledgment, before making a huge exception. His horse expresses its love for that disabled woman.



So, I end with two songs from the 1965 “The Sound of Music” film. I hope that until I die, I will:

“Climb every mountain,
Search high and low,
Follow every byway,
Every path I know.

Climb every mountain,
Ford every stream,

Follow every rainbow,
'Till I find my dream.

A dream that will need
All the love I can give,
Every day of my life
For as long as I live.

Climb every mountain,
Ford every stream,
Follow every rainbow,
Till I find my dream

A dream that will need
All the love I can give,
Every day of my life,
For as long as I live.

Climb every mountain,
Ford every stream,
Follow every rainbow,
Till I find my dream.”

The second song in ‘The Sound of Music’ expresses the hope that Austria – like you and me - like the flower Edelweiss, will survive, beautifully.

Edelweiss...
Edelweiss...
Every morning you greet me
Small and white, clean and bright
You look happy to meet me
Blossom of snow
May you bloom and grow
Bloom and grow forever...

Edelweiss...
Edelweiss...
Bless my homeland forever...
Small and white, clean and bright
You look happy to meet me
Blossom of snow
May you bloom and grow
Bloom and grow forever...

Edelweiss...
Edelweiss...
Bless my homeland forever...

Until our birth into divine eternity, the whole world is our homeland.

A song, whenever I hear it sung, swells my heart with joyful hope.

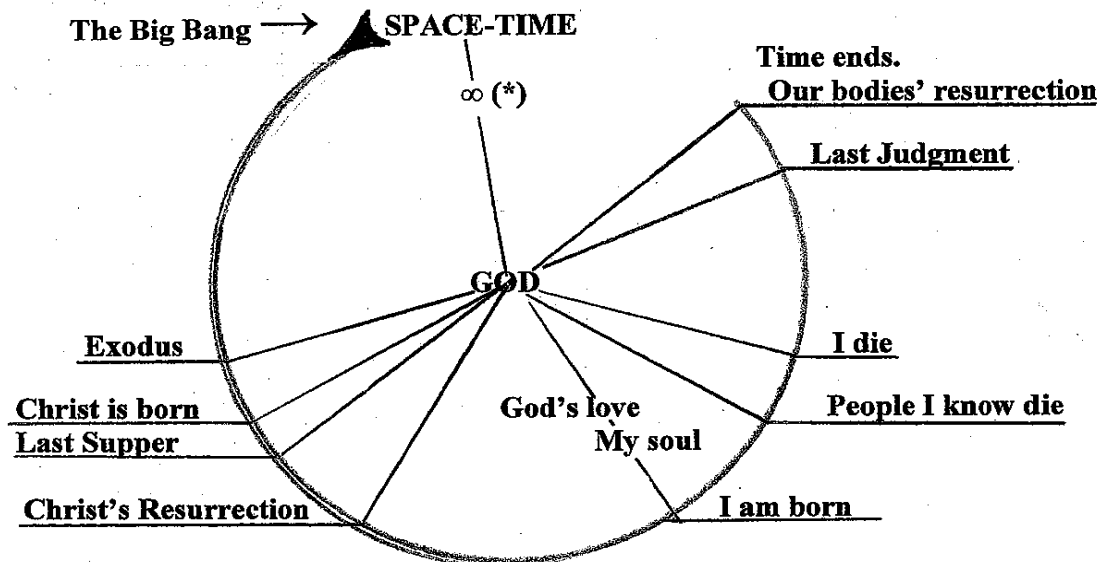
"Hallelujah..." George Frideric Handel (1685-1759)

Rejoice o Judah and in songs divine,
With Cherubin and Seraphin harmonious join,
Rejoice, o Judah, rejoice, rejoice
O Judah, rejoice, and in songs divine,
With cherubin and Seraphin harmonious join
With cherubin and Seraphin harmonious join
Hallelujah cmen, cmen Hallelujah cmen
cnd in songs divine, harmonious join
Hallelujah, cmen, cmen, Hallelujah, cmen,
cmen, cmen, Hallelujah, cmen.

Appendix A

Vlad's Theocentric Wheel [VTW] Whose centre is the spaceless and thus timeless "A & Ω": God

God creates



The VTW model helped me imagine how God, timeless in eternity at the spaceless hub, is also with us on the rim of our space-time wheel.

As God is infinitely 'other', the diameter of VTW is infinite. As parallel lines meet at infinity, the wheel is actually a straight line. Rather than being cyclic, history - and space-time - have a vector.

Backed up by Einstein's Relativity Theorem and the Big Bang, and based on our experience that when life is good time seems to fly by, I see eternity more like an intuitive singularity than an endless rational 'for ever and ever' time-line, (*).

From that central singularity, God sees each one of us, DR, 360° , $24/7$, 365 – every 4 years 366 - days a year.

Somehow, some people tap into the centre of the wheel and as I put it, 'know without knowing'. Some seem to be able to predict death, even their own, well before there is any scientific evidence.

(*) A spaceless point is infinite. Not-finite.