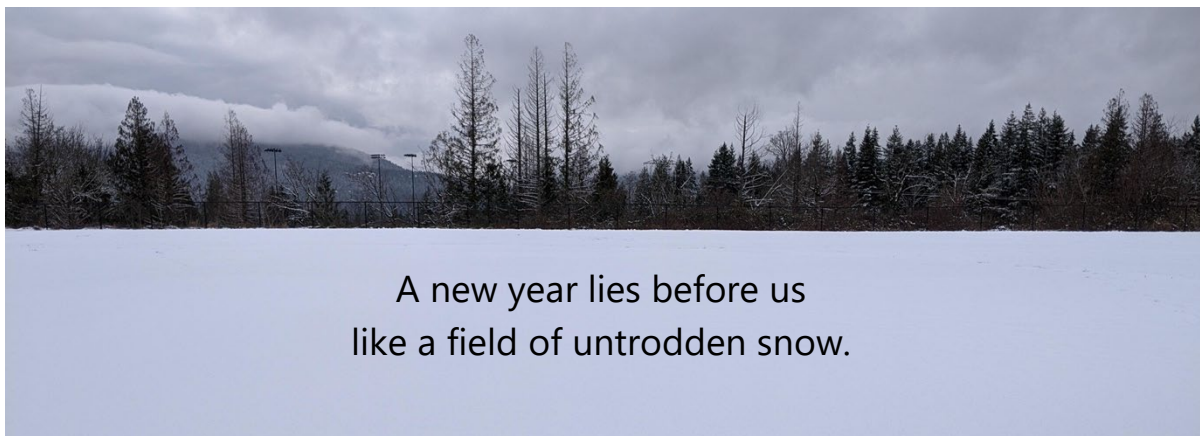


At the Dawn of the New Year

Corrie van den Bosch MSS



It seems something of an anomaly to begin this reflection with an image of snow. It is 40° as I write this. The memory of virgin snow takes me back to my childhood in The Netherlands, the wonder of seeing snow fall, creating a spotless white surface inviting us to be the very first to make an imprint on it...

A similar sense of anticipation arises in me at the dawning of a new year. What will be the imprint I will leave on how 2025 develops? What will be our collective imprint? As CEN members, we hope and trust that our daily contemplative hour will contribute to the evolution of human consciousness, of global, even cosmic, consciousness which enables us to contribute intentionally to the flourishing of Earth and all that lives thereon.

This time last year we were anticipating 2024, hoping that we might contribute to growing



the *Field of Peace*. In our daily contemplation we focused on growing the *Field of Peace*. Yet, as we look back over the year, it seems we have been inundated by stories and images of war, tornadoes, catastrophic floods, droughts and fire, of heart-wrenching human suffering and of increasingly urgent dire warnings of the impact our way of life on Mother Earth. It puzzles me that we humans have discovered, created and built a world beyond that which our great grandparents could have imagined, and yet we have not learnt how to truly love, reverence and respect those we see as *other/not us*, whether human or other than human.

A line of a song comes to me, *we could mend it if we really wanted to...* I can't remember the song, but *could* we mend our fractured world? Perhaps *mend* is not quite what we are called to do. We live in an unfinished Universe, a Universe in the process of growing, stage by stage, into its potential. We ourselves as a human species are part of that process. More than just part, we are conscious participants in the evolving Universe, though we do not know what we (as humans and as Universe) are becoming. We, the conscious dimension of the Cosmos, live in wonder, hope and expectation, ever bringing forth newness. As John Haught keeps reminding us, we are called live in *anticipation* of what is emerging in our evolving reality.¹

We are awakening to the reality of ourselves as a Cosmos that is alive, dynamic, pulsating with the Mystery at its heart, drawing us into ever more being, into ever more goodness and beauty, into ever deeper relationship with all that constitutes the Cosmos. Death and destruction are part of that process as the old makes way for the new.



We are participants in this evolving reality, whether we like it or not. And we are called to become *conscious* participants, each, from our own unique giftedness, consciously contributing to the *more* that is emerging. We stand at the threshold of this new year in wonder and awe, and yes, in fear and trembling, contemplating the privilege and the responsibility of our part in the life of the Cosmos.

Science teaches us that the process of evolution comes about through the convergence of different elements formed by the past. In that convergence the Universe gives birth to the new, and this newness is always surprising. Similarly, our conscious participation in the process of evolution calls us to bring the wisdom of past generations into a new convergence with the Universe story as we can know it today, not the Universe as our ancestors knew it, a creation completed in the beginning of time, but the unfinished Universe in process of becoming. In the convergence of the old and the new, a whole new blossoming of wisdom is emerging. We are too immersed in the process to grasp, or be grasped by, this new wisdom and where it might lead. Modern prophets and mystics are nudging us into its direction. We live and act to the best of our understanding of this emerging wisdom, trusting the greater Wisdom active in the heart of Cosmic life to lead us.

Pope Francis has declared 2025 a jubilee year, calling us to become *pilgrims of hope* in our fractured world. Our unfinished world needs us to be people of hope making our pilgrim

¹ See John F. Haught, *The New Cosmic Story: Inside Our Awakening Universe*, Yale University Press, 2017

way through life. But it is not enough to be pilgrims: our world needs us to be *prophets of hope*, sowing *seeds of hope* wherever we are and in whatever we do. This is the theme we invite CEN members to contemplate in our daily hour throughout this year.

May our fidelity to that contemplation transform us into beacons of hope, particularly in the face of human suffering. The new is being born from today's reality. One day these birth pangs will be forgotten in the wonder and joy of that new. We await that day with joyful trust, knowing that it, too, is a stage on the journey of the Universe unfolding into its full potential.



Happy New Year

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Field of snow:

https://www.reddit.com/r/oddlysatisfying/comments/eoiu99/this_completely_untouched_field_of_snow/#lightbox

War image: CNN Photo

Flaming Cosmos: <https://www.freepik.com/free-photos-vectors/flaming-cosmos/3>

Sunrise: <https://naturebackin.com/2019/04/25/sunrise-dawn-and-times-of-transition/>