

Church News Ireland

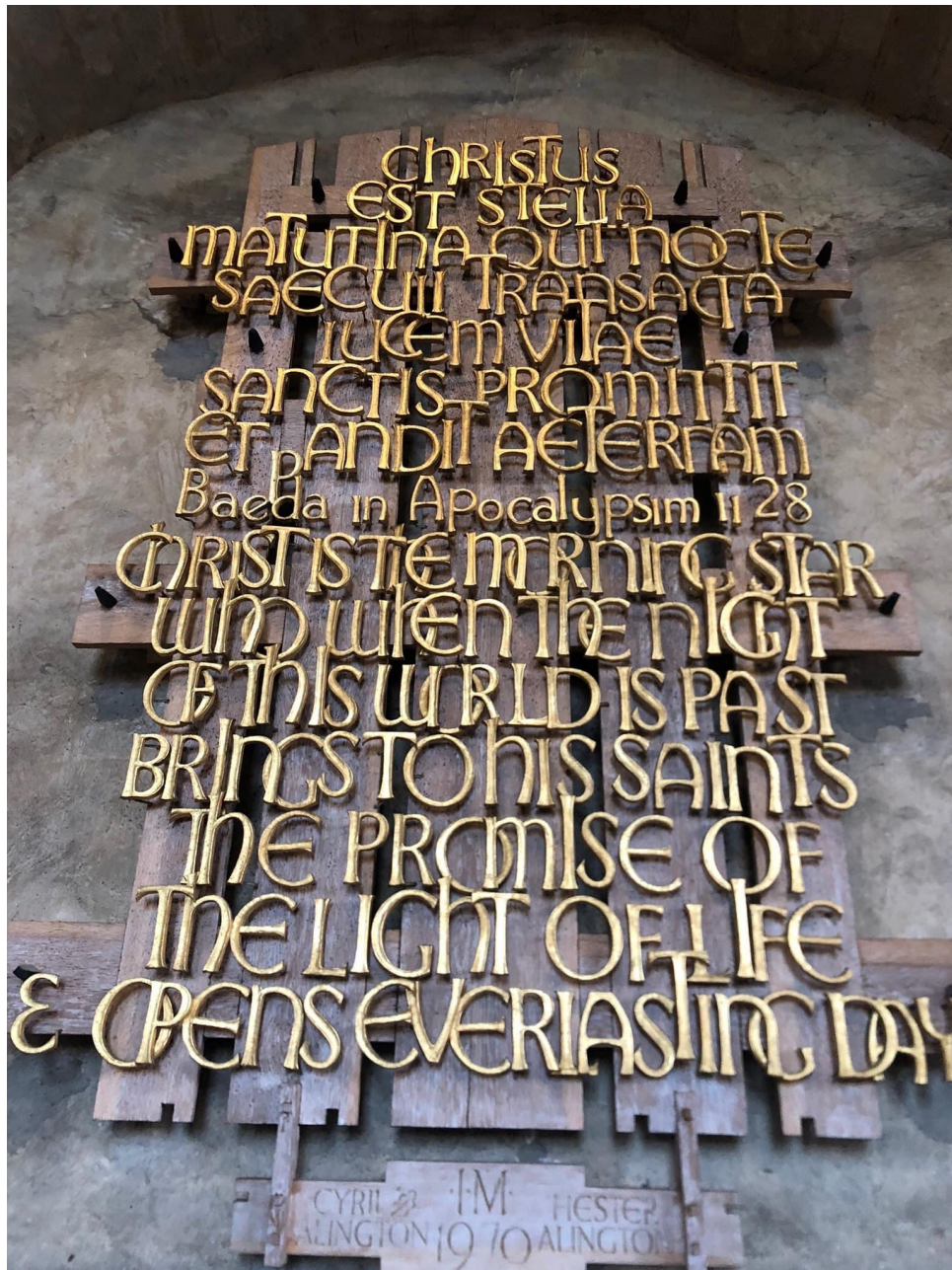


Image of the day – the promise of the Light of Life

People and places

Nativity at St Patrick's Parish Church, Broughshane



January 4, 2023

Nativity at St Patrick's Parish Church, Broughshane



News reports

Husband-and-wife duo who have been key to Boys' Brigade since 1960s stunned by New Year honour

A husband-and-wife team who have been a fixture of Northern Ireland's Boys' Brigade (BB) scene since the 1960s were left stunned at being among those chosen on this 2023 New Year Honours list, Adam Kula writes in The News Letter



Raye Elizabeth Greenaway and her husband Derek Richard Greenaway have both been given British Empire Medals “for services to young people in Northern Ireland through The Boys’ Brigade”.

Mr Greenaway, now aged 87, helped to found the Portadown Battalion of the BB in 1966, aided shortly afterwards by his wife.

Initially about 30 to 40 boys were involved.

Today, there are 19 companies in the battalion, numbering hundreds of boys in total.

Speaking to the News Letter in the wake of the honours list being made public, he said that it had been a shock to receive the letter from the Cabinet Office in Westminster, inviting them to accept or reject the award.

Needless to say, they chose the former.

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“This is something we never thought about,” he said, adding the award is for the whole BB outfit, “not just ourselves”.

A member of the Orange Order and the Royal Black Preceptory, the Church of Ireland stalwart said that his long involvement is driven by a desire to impart his faith and values to the young.

When he started back in 1966, there were no mobile phones, and media was a pale black-and-white precursor of today’s 24/7 online culture.

“At the present time, boys are being bombarded right, left, and centre with things that take them away from the Christian ethos,” he said.

Nowadays, he said, he is seeing the grandchildren of boys he first encountered in the 1960s enlisting in the BB.

He went on to add: “Never in my wildest dreams did I think I’d be recognised in this way, but I’m very happy to accept it – so is my wife.”

The Boys’ Brigade headquarters issued a statement saying: “So delighted for Derek and Raye Greenaway from 1st Milltown.”

Also being recognised in the honours with a British Empire Medal is Ms Helena Mary White, county president, of Girlguiding North Down.

Her accolade is “for services to young people in Northern Ireland”.

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The BEM was reintroduced in 2012 by then-prime minister David Cameron, to sit alongside knighthoods, CBEs, OBEs and MBEs.

It was billed as part of his bid to make the honours system “classless”, saying too few people making a difference in their areas were made MBEs.

The medal went to 305 people in the New Year Honours, UK-wide this year, 33 of them from NI.

Courtesy The News Letter

Final service held at Killinagh Church of Ireland

Due to changing demographics in the area, the decision was made by the parish to bring an end to services in the Church.

Canon Ruth West led the service which was also attended by Bishop of Kilmore Diocese, Ferran Greenfield as well as representatives from the local Catholic and Methodist Churches.

Speaking about the decision Canon West said it was taken due to the health of the parish: “I think they just felt they could have kept the doors open for another couple of years but it would have been a huge struggle and it wouldn’t have benefitted anybody.



“In the end up, I think they’d rather go when there was still a few of them about and mark it well.”

Killinagh was a busy parish with social events, special services, choir, children and youth groups and an active worshipping community explained Canon West.

“However, in recent years we have lost parishioners as they have moved away or passed away, so the difficult and sad decision to close was taken in Spring 2022.

“We are thankful for all those clergy, diocesan lay readers, parish readers, vestry members, sextons, volunteers, parishioners and the wider community who helped make Killinagh such a vibrant parish community.

“Most of all we are thankful to God for his faithfulness, grace and mercy, and though our building may be closing, we know God has never been confined by walls and buildings but has been, is and will be at work thorough his Spirit until Christ returns.”

Parishioners will now travel over to Florencecourt or Druminiskill.

The Rectory in Blacklion was completed in 1857 after the old Redlion Church at Largy was badly damaged in a severe storm in 1839 when its thatched roof was blown off.

Over the years Killinagh had connections with several surrounding parishes.

Dowra Church was originally a daughter church of Killinagh, then became a parish in its own right, later combining with Inishmagrath, and finally returned to it's Killinagh connection in 1960 as part of the Blacklion Group. Kiltyclogher Parish was long associated with Killinagh being grouped in 1926, but in 2002 was transferred to Clogher Diocese in the Garrison Group of Parishes.

In 2001, Killinagh joined Killesher Parish to form the Florencecourt Group of Parishes.

Within the church building there are some interesting features. The stained glass windows in the chancel were given by the Nixon families.

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The two stained glass windows of the Risen Lord and the Good Shepherd were given in memory of Revd Alexander, the Rector of the parish who died suddenly in 1915. The organ was given in memory of those from the parish who died in WW1, while the wooden eagle lectern was given in memory of those who died in WW2 from the parish.

Major renovation works in late 1990s which restored the roof, and a generous gift from Canon Richey helped with a new heating system and sound system.

Report by Ciaran Flaherty courtesy the Impartial Reporter 02/01/2023.

Archbishop of York is "very worried" about Yorkshire's poorest as cost of living crisis continues

The Archbishop of York says he is "deeply concerned" about Yorkshire's poorest communities as the cost-of-living crisis continues to bite.

Speaking to The Yorkshire Post about his hopes for the next 12 months, Stephen Cottrell said 2022 had been a "year of struggle" for many and that Government policies next year should be directed towards helping the poorest.

He said: "It's been an incredible year really with some tremendous highs and some tremendous lows. And it's been a year of struggle for people with the cost of living crisis that's affected so many so so badly."



"It has been a hard year, and at the moment it's a hard winter for many. Christmas will have been, I hope, a joyful time but also a difficult time if you can't heat your house or get your children what they want.

"I'm deeply concerned about the poorest communities in Yorkshire.

"I can't offer false hope, but I can say the Christmas

message is a message of peace and goodwill.

"I hope in Government, all our policies both in national and local government will be looking to serve the common good of everyone with particular care for the poorest and the most excluded, and that we as individuals will reflect that in the decisions we make on how we spend our money and resources."

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Archbishop Cottrell called on people to love their neighbour and draw on moments of togetherness such as the Platinum Jubilee celebrations and the Queen's funeral.

"We are one nation, we do belong to one another," he said.

"That is, I think, what the Jubilee and the Queen's funeral showed us and that's what I think the Coronation will show us - that we belong to each other."

"My interest is tied up with my neighbour's interest. If my neighbour is suffering, that will come back to me in due course.

"I wish I had something more original to say, but my message that I hold onto is we must love one another."

The Archbishop also reflected on one of 2022's most seismic events –the death and funeral of Queen Elizabeth II. He said: "I have amazing memories that I will carry with me throughout my life that I happened to be Archbishop of York at such a time and have a part to play in such a historic occasion.

"It was hard losing her, but there was some real joy as well.

"As a privy councillor, I therefore became a member of what's called the Accession Council, and was one of the eight people who needed to sign the document which declared that Charles is our new King.

"In British life, both church and state, whenever you go to one of these very grand things, there's usually someone

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there who can explain what to do - but of course the Accession Council hasn't met for 70 years, so we all had to figure out what to do.

“It was powerful to be part of, but there was also a funny side behind the scenes where we were saying ‘well you stand there’ and had to work it all out.”

Archbishop Cottrell also shared memories of supporting people in the queue to pay respect to the Queen as she lay in state in Westminster Hall, by allowing them to use Lambeth Palace as an address for food deliveries, revealing that he has received a Christmas card and present from one couple he met in the queue.

“For me, it said something about deep undercurrents in our nation that we can easily ignore - our essential goodness and togetherness. The queue was a great leveller and was very powerful. Of course, it was done in great honour and thanksgiving for the Queen whose great life and service continues to be such a powerful example," he said.

In the media

Six key questions for our education system in 2023 by Mark Bain in the Belfast Telegraph

The education system in Northern Ireland faced difficult times in 2022 and, with the spectre of further budget

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constraints being placed on the Education Authority, the coming one could be just as difficult.

We examine six key issues facing the system in 2023.

The budget crisis

In November the already rocking education system was dealt another hammer blow when Secretary of State Chris Heaton-Harris singled out education for a further £100m in cuts.

Already struggling after years of underinvestment, services will undoubtedly be curtailed. Schools will be told there will be less to spend. Some essential services will be further compromised.

Just where those cuts are to be made falls at the feet of the Education Authority.

Protests have already been held outside EA headquarters against potentially devastating news for youth centres, some saying that even reducing services might not be enough to save them from closure.

Fears are that the Special Education system will be the worst affected by budget cuts with a severe shortage of places for children who need them.

That lack of finance will also place a more glaring spotlight on the future of many schools which the EA deem “unsustainable”. And with rising costs in the building trade, long term build projects will also be under threat.

Industrial action

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A long-running stalemate over a pay dispute dating back to 2021 is ongoing. Nothing is likely to change there in the short-term with all teaching unions behind the industrial action.

All schools will need to make do with less when they're crying out for more.

Unions have already expressed fears that jobs in schools will be at risk as education tries to balance that ever diminishing budget.

New transfer test system

From November 2023, the days of the two transfer tests will be gone. The AQE and PPTC have been replaced by a grammar school led single transfer test system.

The new organisation — SEAG — said the test will consist of two papers to be sat on two Saturdays, two weeks apart, on November 11 and 25.

Results will be sent to children who sit the common test in early 2024. Parents and schools will hope it all goes without teething problems.

Either way, more questions will be raised about academic selection.

Integrated education

Last year was a big one for integrated education with the passing of an Integrated Education Bill brought to the Assembly by Alliance MLA Kellie Armstrong.

It sought to place the sector on an equal footing with others, though was opposed by the DUP.

The integrated sector itself set a new target of 100 integrated schools by 2025, though any hopes they had of achieving that could be scuppered as the approval of a Minister is needed to allow for transformation. There will be plenty of eyes on the new legislation to see what effect it has on other sectors if Stormont can make any progress.

Independent Review of Education

The panel is due to present a report into the entire education system in the spring, though it remains a distinct possibility, a six month extension, which has been allowed for in the process, will take any publication further into 2023.

But until an Executive is up and running it remains doubtful what immediate impact the review can have in real terms.

There will no doubt be plenty for the education sector to digest but what benefit can be gleaned depends, once again, on the financial implications and the willingness of Stormont to embrace the recommendations.

Higher education

The education budget does not affect university level education in Northern Ireland.

It's the Department for the Economy budget that all eyes will be on.

As yet, there is no real indication on what the new levels of finance will be, but there are already warnings that the number of places for students from Northern Ireland who wish to take courses at Queen's University and Ulster University will be reduced should the budget be reduced.

Both Queen's and Ulster University have said they will need an extra 5,000 places for local students by 2030, due to a projected rise in the number of 18-19-year-olds, but that will need more money which could only come from an increase in government grants or a rise in tuition fees.

The Department for the Economy has warned universities they will have to re-examine future spending priorities as it faces a “difficult” budget position.

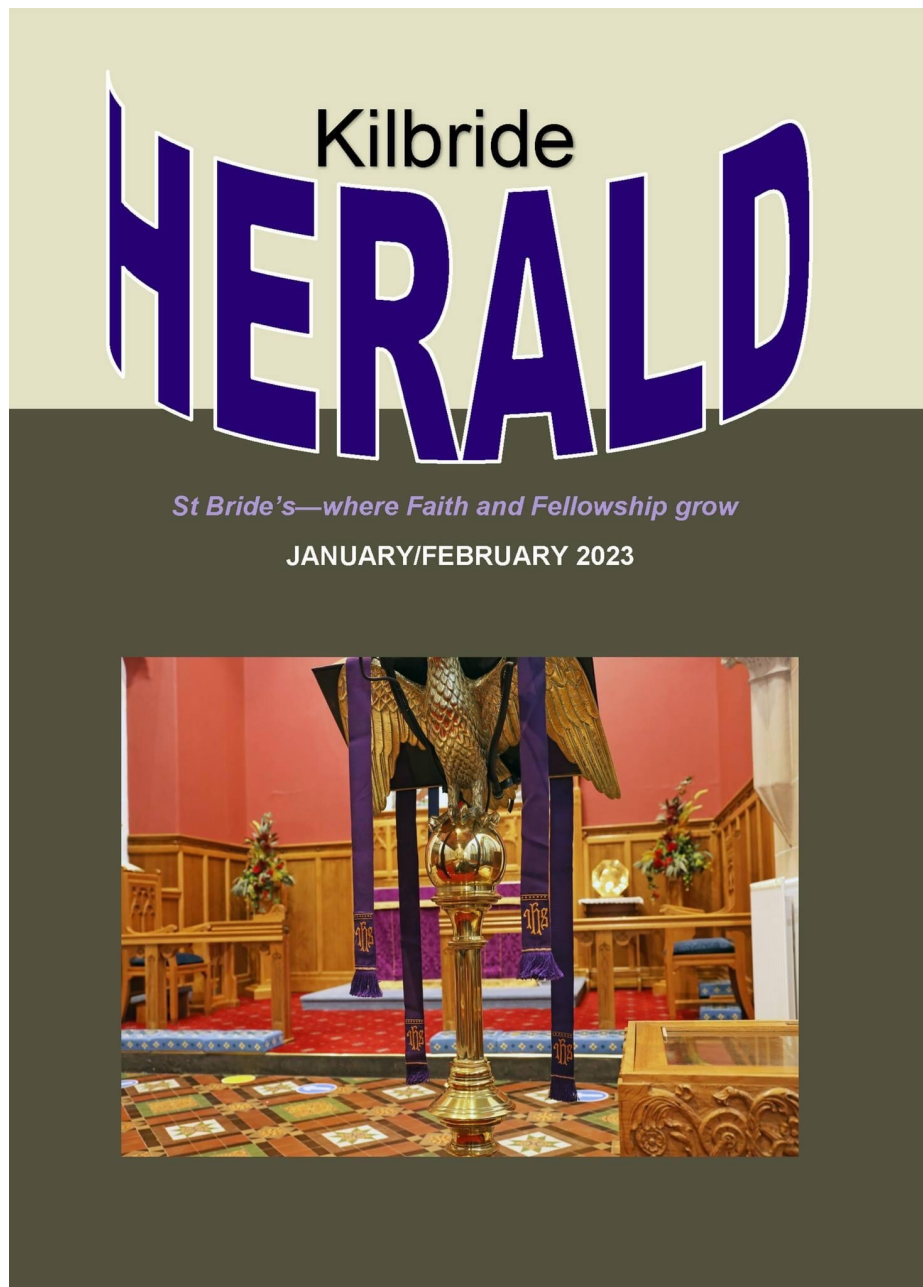
University staff return fresh from industrial action over pay and conditions while students themselves continue to voice fears over the rising cost of living and a lack of support.

Courtesy The Belfast Telegraph, January 02, 2023

Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books

The Kilbride Herald

The latest edition of the Kilbride Herald is available to read and download on the Kilbride Parish Church website.



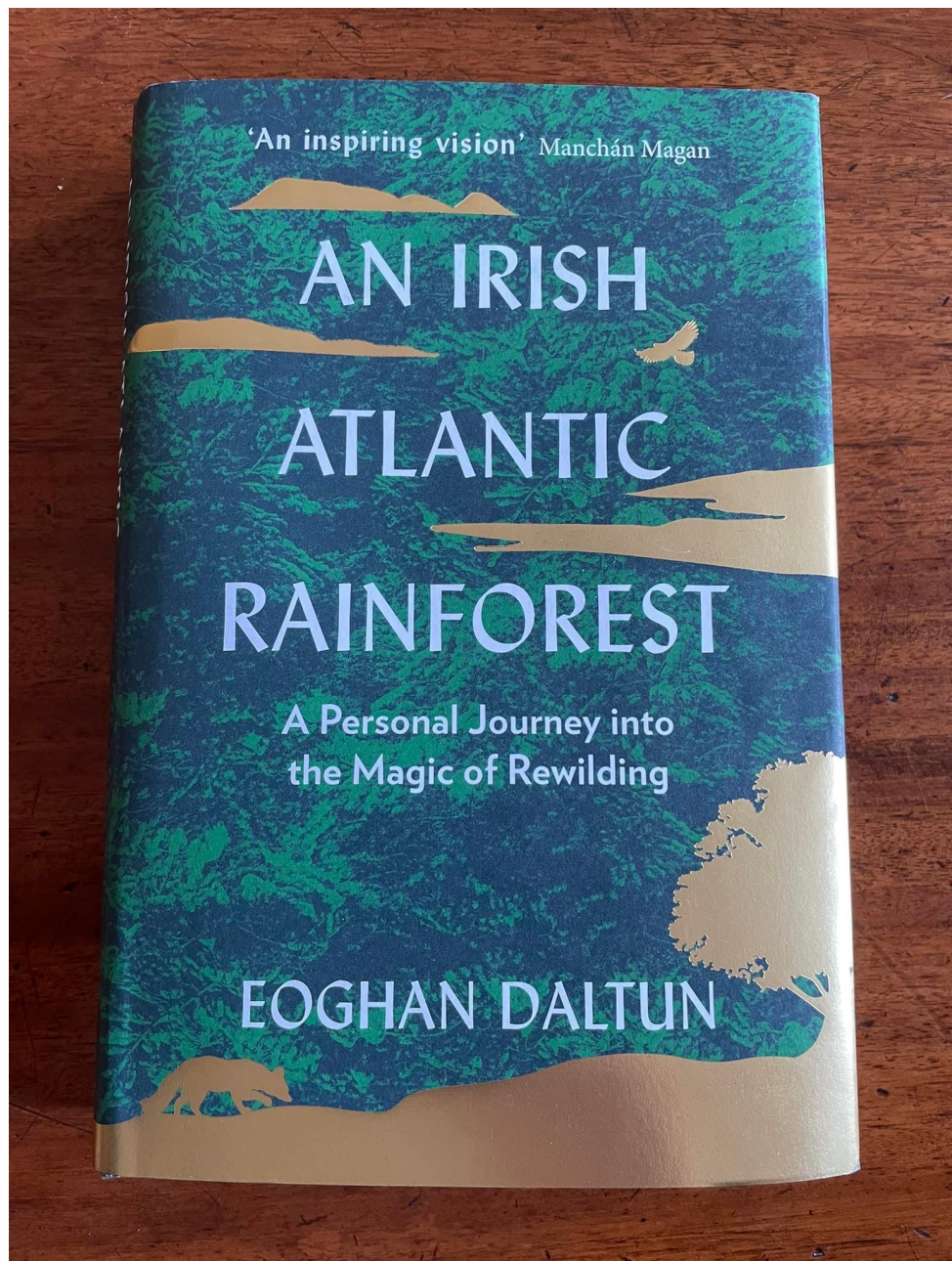
Follow this link - <https://www.kilbrideparishchurch.org/useful-information-links>

A bishop's book

'Our relationship with nature is a broken one, but it can be repaired.' I've just finished this thought provoking book by Eoghan Dalton and recommend it. I met him a number of years ago when he was restoring a memorial to the mathematician George Boole in St Michael's Church,

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Blackrock in
Cork. It's
honest about
the
challenges,
and the need
to sustain
rural
communities
too -
**Bishop
Adrian
Wilkinson**



Poem for today

Funny January Poem by Anon

T'was the month after Christmas, and all through the house,
nothing would fit me, not even a blouse;
The cookies I'd nibbled, the egnog I had to taste,
at the holiday parties had gone to my waist;

When I got on the scales there arose such a number!
When I walked to the store (less a walk than a lumber),
I'd remember the marvelous meals I'd prepared,
The gravies and sauces and beef nicely rared;

The wine and the rum balls; the bread and the cheese,
and the way I'd never said, "No thank you, please."
As I dressed myself in my husband's old shirt,
and prepared once again to do battle with dirt,
I said to myself, as only I can,
"You can't spend a winter disguised as a man!"

So, away with the last of the sour cream dip.
Get rid of the fruit cake, every cracker and chip.
Every last bit of food that I like must be banished,
'til all the additional ounces have vanished.

I won't have a cookie--not even a lick.
I'll want only to chew on a long celery stick.
I won't have hot biscuits, or corn bread, or pie,
I'll munch on a carrot and quietly cry.

I'm hungry, I'm lonesome, and life is a bore,
But isn't that what January is for?
Unable to giggle, no longer a riot.
Happy New Year to all and to all a good diet!

Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site



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