

(See also 16 January)

- 1 The people of Ancient Rome thought there were many gods, and the month of January is named after 'Janus', their god of doors and gateways, of beginnings and endings. In Rome, the temple of Janus had doors facing east and west for the rising and setting of the sun, the beginning and end of each day. Between those doors stood the statue of Janus with two faces, looking in opposite directions.
- 2 As we start the New Year, looking both backwards and forwards, we can think of the new year as a gate - an opening - to what we choose to do in the future. The darkness of winter and of past mistakes will give way to the light of spring and of new opportunities.
- 3 In the dark days of World War II, with the whole country "blacked out" at night to deter enemy bombing, King George VI (*the sixth*) gave a glimmer of hope to people as he spoke these words:
- 4 *I said to the man
who stood at the gate of the Year:
"Give me a light
that I may tread safely into the unknown."
And he replied:
"Go out into the darkness
and put your hand into the hand of God.
That shall be to you
better than light,
and safer than a known way.
May that almighty hand
guide and uphold us all."*
- 5 *Let us pray:*

**Lord Jesus,
at this time
we can look back to the old year,
and forward to the new.**

**We give thanks
for the blessings of the past year,
and we place into your hands
the mistakes we have made.
As you are "the Light of the world",
take away the darkness in our lives.
As you are "the Way",
lead us in the year ahead.
As you are "the gate of the sheepfold",
protect us from danger.
We entrust the past to your mercy, Lord,
the present to your love,
and the future to your providence.
Amen.**

This is an excerpt from the page of this date in
'Praying Each Day of the Year'
a 3-volume book
by Nicholas Hutchinson, FSC.

For details:

<http://www.matthew-james.co.uk/>

Could make use of a search engine
to research this topic further.

This material is part of
the prayer and education website
of the De La Salle Brothers
in Great Britain:
www.prayingeachday.org