Reflections on Hope by Mary J. Howell, Holy Child Associate, European Province

Why should we hope even in the midst of personal struggles and difficulties

and not give way to despair?

Cornelia: be full of hope and trust in God.

We hope because God is with us, encouraging us to love.

We know that God has been with us in the past.

The heart of the Christian story is resurrection and new life following the suffering and death of Jesus.

Life and death, hope and despair, are reflected in life’s cycle,

Spring and new life after the long hard winter.

The first snowdrop, light after darkness, proliferates into a gleaming host.

The joy of birth helps us forget the long and painful labour.

The hope of joys to come as the child grows and thrives.

Hope is our responsibility.

Light within is the fire of hope and a passion for change.

May the stories we hear move us from indifference to deep connection.

Each of us has a personal journey from the gift of life to death and to new life as we respond to the fullness of meaning of Christian hope.

Always be ready to give an explanation to anyone who asks you for a reason for your hope -- 1 Peter 3:15

And You will see that if you live in hope, others will seek to understand why and how. They will seek reasons to counter the hopelessness by which they are surrounded.