Sharing the Light

“To give light to those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death,
To guide our feet into the way of peace.” Luke 1:79

The Darkness
This has been a year of death and darkness. Well over 1 million souls entered
eternity because of COVID-19. New York State alone lost over 34,000 people
so far.[1] It has also been a year of loss through violence and war. During the
conflict in the contested region of Nagorno-Karabakh this year, close to 5,000
soldiers lost their lives along with an undetermined number of civilians.\[2\] Ongoing fighting in Ethiopia has killed probably hundreds of civilians and soldiers. The conflict there still rages making official counts impossible. Add to these discouraging reports the increased numbers of those who have receded deeper in darkness under the stress of this year. Suicides are up, mental health problems are increasing, and drug abuse is through the roof. I could go on about political and social upheaval and other ills we’ve seen this year.

While these troubles are nothing new to our cursed world, perhaps you and I have noticed them this year like no other time in our lives. Days are dark. Death feels near.

The Light

Aren't you glad that we can finish this year focusing our hearts again on the hope of Christmas? Zacharias, an Israelite priest and the father of John the Baptist, in his song of praise at the birth of his prophet son declared the soon-to-arrive Messiah’s mission this way, “To give light to those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace” (Luke 1:79). Theirs was a dark day, as well, perhaps darker than ours. Violence, disease, oppression, and growing ungodliness were all around and within 1\textsuperscript{st} century
Israel. Christ’s birth itself was followed by atrocious murder and evil at the hand of Herod. But Jesus arrived as the Son of God, a light unextinguishable by the forces of evil. He would be a light to the nations accomplishing forgiveness and conquering death for all. This is the mission Christ is still carrying out today.

Luke 1:79 is a message of hope for the one trapped in the dark. It’s speaks of the coming of a Rescuer who meets people in the darkness, on the path toward death, and guides them out by His light. The one born that Christmas night made all the difference in your life and in mine. We face these days of trouble with peace in our hearts knowing that He who began this work in us will complete it taking us all the way to glory.

Sharing the Light
Billions still wait in darkness awaiting this message of light in the darkness and peace in the midst of war.
As the war against the “invisible enemy” of COVID-19 has taught us, there is no time to lose. What time could be better than now to begin to speak more often of Christ to your neighbor or coworker? What better time than now to resolve to take the message of Christ to the nations? As you seek to find your “new normal,” may it include a renewed zeal and a fresh desire to share this light and this peace to a hurting and lost world. May God’s Spirit enable us, and may His Church rise up with His light to counter the darkness.

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