



Walk in the Light,
Beautiful Light. Come where the dew drops of Mercy Shine Bright,
Shine all around us by day and by night:
Jesus, the Light of the World.

This Christmas, I invite all those who hear the joyous message of Christmas to embrace and live the power of the Light of Christ. " Witnessing to the Light from Everywhere for Everyone!" (*The theme of the 150th Anniversary of the Society of the Divine Word*).

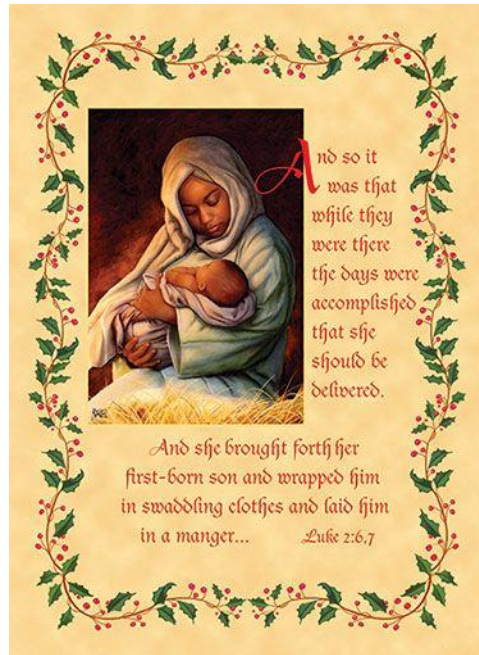
I believe that we can not only find inspiration and joy from not only the celebration of Christmas, but also in truly seeking to allow our very lives to give witness to the power of the light shining forth from our hearts. Truly, a world that has been engulfed in darkness and continues on a path of darkness can only be transformed from darkness to light, hatred to love, and discord to peace when we truly allow Christ to illumine our lives that we become witnesses to the transformative power of God's light for our world.

I take for my reflection and encouragement for Christmas the message of the Prophet Isaiah as he proclaims a message of hope to a people and a world that had been engulfed by darkness. Darkness brought about ignorance, war, violence, and lack of understanding. This message was proclaimed from Galilee, where the onslaught of war and violence of the Assyrians had overcome the people. Judah had lived in this darkness again and again and been overcome by all that it brought that shadowed them from the light that God had desired to liberate them from their darkness.

**The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
Upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom
A light has shone.
You have brought them abundant joy
and great rejoicing,**

In the Christmas proclamation, we hear the Gospel of John, which states that from the beginning, the Divine Word has been truly light and life for humanity if only we seek it. The darkness of ignorance and sin, the darkness of hate and intolerance, the darkness of division and untruth cannot overcome the power of the light of goodness, love, and truth.

***"In the Beginning was the Word, and the Word was in God
Presence and the Word was God." "What came to be through him
was life,
And this life was the light of the human race;
The light shines in the darkness,
And the darkness has not overcome it."***



The abundant joy and rejoicing of this season add meaning to our lives only if we allow it to truly touch our hearts, impelling us to believe that our faith and life can become a transformative expression of our experience of God's light, life and joy. As we move forward into a future that is full of uncertainty and lacking clarity and direction, we seek the path of light and truth that comes from our willingness to ***"Witness to the Light from Everywhere to Everyone."*** In seeing the suffering of the poor most impacted, whether it by the lack of care of the environment, the plight of the immigrant, or those whose lives are affected by unjust and unnecessary wars, we find an opportunity to proclaim with all our ability and might, the truth that the Light is not overcome even against these odds. The light that fills our lives becomes a beacon of light that drives out darkness and leads us and others to encounter and walk in the light of life, which is God and His way to life, peace, love, and unity.