

## LIGHT CAME, LOVE WAS ANNOUNCED, ETERNAL LIFE GIVEN

What do we do when the lights go out? Where do we turn? What do we search for? We live in an incredible time when outlets to power and its source can be found in almost every room of the house. We are blessed. Our lives are also blessed by the power source of the true Light of the World, Jesus Christ.

Our Lent is a response to all that God is doing. God is doing a lot. In the Gospel, we are told that God so loved the world that Jesus was sent to show us the way. Condemning of the world was overcome through the saving act of the Son of God. Light has been given to shine forth, overwhelming the acts of evil done in darkness. This incredible outpouring demands our response. Lent is our response.

Growing up, life changed when the power went out. At that moment of power loss, flashlights were searched for and candles were lit. Surrounded by darkness with just a few glimmers of light was a huge contrast from when how things were when the power was on and our rooms were fully lit. What a joy there would be when the power was restored. When we were surrounded by more darkness than light our safety concerns changed. Everyone made sure to stay close. We all prepare for power shortages differently. Some families have backup generators, others have extra battery packs. When the power goes out, we panic, assess the situation and change plans.

God's power never goes out. He longs for us to be in the light. God wants us to yearn to be in the light and prefer it. It is not just the light on the outside. God is inviting us this Lent to transverse the stairway into the depths of our souls to bring the light to the dark crevasses of our sin and brokenness. The paradox is that we must sit in the darkness to yearn for the light. How much brighter is the light when we see it contrasting with the darkness? St. Teresa of Calcutta (Mother Teresa) always spoke of the light within one's eyes. She would say when many would come to knock on her door to become a follower and join her convent, she would look at the light in their eyes. If they were searching to fulfill something, she would let them know that their visit would be short. But when there was already light in their eyes, she would embrace them and have them stay to discern if this was a life for them. The light within one's eyes is a signal of what is happening within a light that connects to the soul.

To yearn for this kind of light one must integrate the knowledge they have with the love they experience and the holiness that comes from God. To live in this kind of light takes yearning for the proclamation of God's love, His light, and His gift of eternal life. Light came, Love was announced and eternal life was given. Now it is up to us to respond.



Father John Ouper