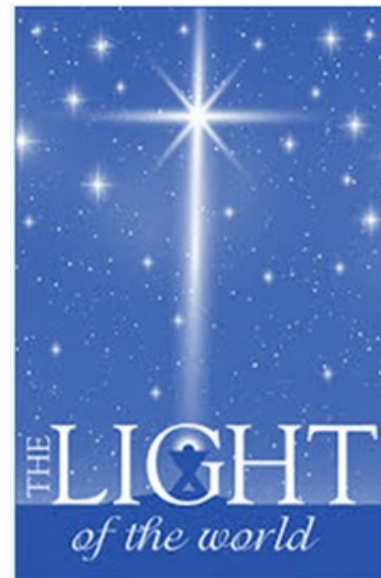


December 2023

Dear Sisters and Friends,

Christmas invites us, especially in dark times, to reflect on the LIGHT and its relationship to LIFE. In our 21st century light saturated world, we are often at pains to avoid or limit invasive and annoying lights. We sometimes even crave darkness, associating it with our longing for peace and quiet! And yet, we are simultaneously, scientifically, more than ever aware that all LIFE requires LIGHT!



Long before we moderns became aware of the dependence of LIFE upon LIGHT the ancient spiritual traditions associated it with the Divine energy, and the beginnings of life. Is it any wonder then, that the celebration of the Solstice, the return of the light, became the time chosen in early Christendom to mark the birth of the Christ Child, the Light of the World?

Jesus, steeped as He was in the Isaiah tradition, clearly understood and identified himself as the lifegiving light of the world, and spoke about it plainly to his disciples. In John 8:12 we read: "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life"

As we rejoice in the greatest gift of Christmas, Christ, the Light of the World, we are full of gratitude, and are reminded of the wonderful T.S. Eliot poem of thanksgiving for all the ways in which the Light of Christ is made manifest among us. We offer it in a spirit of thanksgiving for the ways in which "You are the light of the world" Matthew 14.

With Blessings of peace and joy,

Theresa Mahoney, Karen Gleeson,

Marian Krauskopf, Jean Ann Ledwell

The Ursuline Sisters of Chatham

O Light Invisible

**Greater Light, we praise Thee for the less;
The eastern light our spires touch at morning,
The light that slants upon our western doors at evening.
The twilight over stagnant pools at batflight,
Moon light and star light, owl and moth light,
Glow-worm glowlight on a grassblade.
Light Invisible, we worship Thee!**

**We thank Thee for the lights that we have kindled,
The light of altar and of sanctuary;
Small lights of those who meditate at midnight
And lights directed through the coloured panes of windows
And light reflected from the polished stone,
The gilded carven wood, the coloured fresco.
Our gaze is submarine, our eyes look upward
And see the light that fractures through unquiet water.
We see the light but see not whence it comes.
Light Invisible, we glorify Thee!**

T.S.Eliot