**“DARKNESS CAN NEVER OVERCOME LIGHT”**

**When Jesus walked among us, Isaiah’s stupendous prophecy was fulfilled. Isaiah had foretold the day when the people who sat in darkness would see a great light. Jesus the light of the world walked among us and still walks among us as our true vine, as our bringer of light and of all that is good. Because Christ is our bringer of such great light, we know darkness will never, ever be able to overcome our Light of the World, our Lord, our savior. Nor will darkness ever overcome any one of us, unless we allow it to overcome us.**

 **This is the message we all need to hear right now as many of us feel discouraged. As some of us wonder how does our nation move forward? How do any of us move forward? We move forward by always remembering darkness never has and never will conquer the Light of Christ. We move forward by knowing we are each a branch on the great vine we proclaim as our Lord and savior, our Christ, our ever present beacon of Light and hope. We all need to engrave on our hearts; darkness can never overcome the Light of the world, our Christ, our savior, our Lord. We all need to remember the Light of the world needs all of us, his branches, to proclaim and live out the Gospel of Peace, the Gospel of justice, the Gospel of love, the Gospel of infinite forgiveness and mercy.**

**Martin Luther King Jr. said, “Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.**” **We all know the wonderful hymn “This Little light of Mine”. That is who we each are; we are Christ’s little Lights in the world. Separately we don’t cast a great light. Not all of us can be a Martin Luther King Jr., or a Mother Teresa. But we can stand and hold our light high and never forget darkness will never overcome Light. We can all stand together and together our single lights, our single branches on the great vine can make a large and profound statement. We can never forget we are the branches of the great vine, Jesus. We can never let hopelessness place our lights in jeopardy of going out. We can never allow fear to creep into our hearts placing our light in danger of going out. Christ depends on us. We are his messengers in the world God created for us to enjoy. Not to reign over, but enjoy with all the other sentient life he placed on our beautiful planet earth.**

**What can each of us do? How can we help? There are an infinite variety of opportunities for each of us to serve our Lord and grow his light. There are an infinite number of ways for each of us to join other lights and make the cause we choose grow stronger and brighter by the day. Mother Teresa said, “Never worry about numbers. Help one person at a time. Start with the person nearest you.” Start with the person nearest you. Start with the cause nearest you, start with the cause nearest your heart. Join a local environmental group, because species are disappearing every day. If you’re fond of animals go help walk dogs at the shelter. Go to a nursing home, talk to someone who may not have anyone else to talk to. Be a little light joining other little lights until your commitment, your particular cause shines brightly. Let your light glow in your heart, in your actions, in your prayers, in those you touch.**

**Jesus said “Follow me” to the fishermen casting their nets into the sea. He told them he would make them fishers of people. He’s telling us don’t let your light hide under a bushel, follow me. He’s telling us don’t let any of your gifts, your intuitions, your belief in certain causes hide under a bushel. He’s telling us bring out your gifts, let them shine,. He’s telling us bring out those special feelings of wanting to be part of a cause greater than you. He’s telling us follow me, the bringer of a light, so that darkness can never overcome. Follow me, the Light of the world. Follow me, all you who are weary, discouraged, lonely or afraid.**

**There is a time, and a place and a moment in our lives when we are asked to be more than we ever thought we could be. Perhaps we never dreamed we too could be fishers of people, and yet each of us can be by simply reaching out and helping those around us. Perhaps we never dreamed we could become part of something larger than ourselves. Perhaps we never gave a great deal of thought to being the branches on the great vine, our Lord. We, each of every one of us, are the hands and feet and heart and inspiration that help our Lord make the world a shining, brighter, better place. Perhaps at times we’ve each lingered in that twilight zone of what can I do, I’m just one person. Perhaps we’ve never really considered the words to the Hymn, “This Little Light of Mine” and how it ends every verse with “I’m going to let it shine, let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.”**

**I remember watching leader at a convention singing all the verses to “This Little Light of Mine.” Somehow he tapped into his childhood as he did all the motions children would learn to do to this hymn in Sunday school. I had no idea how many verses there were to this hymn, but this man knew them all. He danced and sang and did all the hand motions with the abandon of a young child. He was in the moment, he was singing to the Light, and it was beautiful to watch. We are to be as free as he was in that moment. Free to overcome any fear we may hold in our hearts. Free to have the courage to do more than we ever have for one another. Free to endlessly work for peace and justice. Free to become fishers of people, free to grow into ever stronger branches on our everlasting vine, Jesus Christ. Free to stand in the light and know that darkness can never overcome what is good, what is right, what grows the heart, and brings peace. Free to always know darkness never has and never will overcome Light.**