An Advent Reflection

Written by Sister Rita Margraff

Come, Lord Jesus, come and visit your people
We await your coming, come, O Lord

And on that day, a branch shall spring from Jesse's tree
A kind of hope that brings new life for those who wait.

And on that day, a hope shall rise for those who seek
*A light shall shine for those who walk amid the gloom.**

This song, written by Dan Schutte, uses the words of the prophet Isaiah to herald the coming of the Lord. It is a favorite of mine during this Advent season. The sisters with whom I live will know that although I welcome Advent and the time of preparation for the birth of Jesus, I do not like the fact that in this part of our hemisphere, Advent coincides with the darkest days of our year. They hear me complaining even in November (especially at the end of daylight saving time) that it is already dark about 5 p.m. It has become something of a joke among us.

So the works of the prophet as they appear in Schutte's song, bring me some comfort – a light shall shine. And, of course, I know that after December 21st, the days will become longer. In fact, last year, I noted the time of sunrise and sunset each day and found that the light did overcome the darkness – a few minutes at a time.

A light shall shine for those who walk amid the gloom. There are so many in our world who 'walk amid the gloom.' The people of Ukraine, the people of China and Iran, parents of the children killed in Uvalde, friends and relatives of those killed at the nightclub in Colorado Springs, at the Tops Market in Buffalo, New York, those experiencing food shortages especially on the African continent. I think about them most mornings during my time of prayer – knowing that there is little I can do for them except pray.

Something I can do is try to be a light that shines for those whose lives I touch each day (beginning with not complaining about the darkness). I meet people every day: people on the elevator in my apartment complex, cashiers in the stores where I shop. I can reach out by phone to someone who is lonely. I can send a card to someone who is ill and needs some light in her life.

How can ***you*** be a light to those who walk amid the gloom? Let's do this together. Happy Advent!

*You can find this song on YouTube.(One example)