December 6, 2015

Advent takes place during the longest nights of the year. Many of us go to work in the dark and return home in the dark. Night and darkness have long been used as metaphors for fear, hopelessness and struggle. The natural world seems more ominous during December.

Our human world appears even darker. It feels as though much is unraveling for us, both at home and abroad. The violence of war and terrorism, the refugee crisis, conflict among peoples, and the absence of compassion has shocked us. We have the sense things are spinning out of control. The world has always been a hard place but it feels more so day by day.

Our faith, however, offers a different perspective. John’s Gospel tells us, *the Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it*. We do not ignore the night or try to glibly explain it away. It is very real. Yet, we refuse to give it the last word. This is because we know there is nothing more powerful than God’s love.

Our desire to embrace the light means we must confront the temptation to fear. Feeding the darkness is not an option. More than ever, what is needed is the courage to respond that love is greater than evil, and compassion stronger than vengeance.

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