

"The Invitation of Christmas"

About a month before Christmas in 1965, a power failure of New York City's Consolidated Edison blacked out the entire city of New York. The disaster occurred at just about the height of the evening winter rush hour, when darkness was beginning to descend upon the city. Thousands of commuters were caught in tunnels and trains. Thousands were trapped in high rises. Thousands were trapped in crowded elevators between floors of tall buildings. What amazed the citizens of New York, especially the police of the city, was the response of the people to the blackout. A few grew angry, and a few took advantage of the situation. But by and large, the people responded with amazing concern. They helped one another. They worked together to assist the elderly in a special way. You could hear singing on commuter trains and in darkened corridors of skyscrapers. The blackout and the nearness to Christmas helped the people discover a dimension in themselves that they never knew they had. One reporter used the words of Isaiah to describe the miracle: "The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom a light has shone."

Christmas is an invitation for each one of us to discover in ourselves a dimension of goodness, which we call Jesus Christ. It's an invitation to let that dimension shine forth into the darkness of today's world. If Jesus is to be born anew into our modern world, it must be through us. We must let the Light of the World shine through us first, if we are to become a light to our world. To the extent that we heed the invitation of Christmas, to that extent will our modern world receive the gift of Christmas: peace on earth and goodwill toward all.

If you do see the light of the Christmas invitation, you will know that.....

YOU ARE LOVED,

Deacon Dan