



## Light in the darkness LWF Christmas Message 2019

*“The light shines in the darkness,  
and the darkness did not overcome it.” (John 1:5)*

Dear friends. I greet you with the Words of Scripture in John 1:5, saying, “The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.”

Once again, as we celebrate Christmas, we greet each other with the words “Merry Christmas”. Yet we also know that life is not at all merry for many families, communities and countries around the world. For many, this time may be marked by hate, anger and suspicion. There are many whose lives may be filled with disappointment, deep sorrow and loneliness.

Amid such suffering and gloom, the gospel offers us the hope of “... light in the darkness...”

Christ is the light that shines in the thickest darkness; a light that dispels the gloom of human hearts and brings life and hope. As the light of the world, Jesus fed the hungry, released those bound by demons, healed the sick and taught the Word of God to women and men. Still today the sacred text echoes that hope: “Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the



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light of life." God, who is gracious, still sends us light that penetrates and turns our darkness into day.

As we celebrate Christmas, dear Christian friends, we are called to be bearers of Christ's redeeming light, a task that can come with huge sacrifices or costs. There is no doubt that the world is in dire need of God's transforming light at this time of fragmentation and barefaced injustices.

Today, the world is darkened by forces that suffocate life including discrimination, exclusion, populism, racism and human perversion. The manifestation of such forces can cause people to become discouraged and doubt the power of Christ's light in our world.

Amidst such tensions, Christmas reminds us how God reached out to us in love. Therefore, rather than despair, Christ invites us to be agents through whom God expresses unconditional love and compassion for humanity.

Imagine how different the world would look if each of us allows the light of Christ to shine in our lives, families, and environments!

May this light be switched on in every human heart and in every corner of the earth. May it transform hearts of brutality and hate into hearts of love. May God grant us grace to be the hands and feet of Christ, making the light visible and transformational for others.

Let the Light come into our hearts by faith. And let it shine in the darkness of this world. Merry Christmas!

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*Illustration by Belarus artist Volha Prankevich on  
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