

# Lent 2016

**“Wisdom and experience tell us that darkness, too, can be a gift of the provident God.”** *Myra Rodgers, CDP*

We often say with the apostle Thomas, “seeing is believing.” We flock to sites of apparitions and admire those who actually saw the Blessed Virgin. Still we also know that we are not sources of light like a sun or even a firefly. We reflect light; we depend on light to see.

We also acknowledge darkness or absence of light. Since ancient times darkness has been associated with negativity, with evil. Yet both light and darkness are real. Are both valuable?

Night is the time for the good of sleep, of rest. Absence of light, for example, in a painting, provides the beauty of a contrast. Darkness is necessary for us to see heavenly bodies.

Early Christian writers saw value in absence or darkness. “Negative theology,” to know what God is not is valuable. God is not evil, is not limited, is not what we dislike in human creatures (vindictiveness, injustice, envy, etc.)

Often we learn more about God in times of darkness, conflict, dryness in prayer, or loneliness. We beg for help because we become more aware of our limitations, weaknesses, ignorance, sinfulness. We renew our trust in God’s provident care.

Wise persons in times of darkness accept what cannot be changed by us and see it as a gift. Dark times make us realize our true limitations as finite creatures. We can ask God, as well as others, for relief or light. A Providence woman sings God’s praise even in the darkness. Her song responds to God’s gift.

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Women of Providence  
in Collaboration*