

Text: 2 Peter 1:19

"You will do well to pay attention to this, as to a ~~light~~^{light} shining in a dark place ---"

1973 Oct. 14

My Christian Friends:

I am happy to occupy this pulpit again, where I used to stay many times in the past. To visit old, well remembered places again, is a unique ^{and} joyous - but at the same time, often a sad occasion: we meet old friends and loved ones, and try not to notice the faces that are not so youthful anymore, the eyes that not sparkle ^{like} they used to years ago. - We might not notice these proofs of fleeting time - but we must notice one thing: many old friends are not there any more and we sadly miss their warm embraces, friendly handclaps and welcoming words. Meeting you, my good friends, again once in a great while, is the same experience.

But this is life - no one has the right to complain about it. Someday all of us must start the final stretch on the road of all living.

I am happy to see you again - but, just like you, I miss sorely all those whom in the past I so often have seen sitting in the pews.

I have heard the news about the latest addition to the church building: the cross on the steeple!

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that shines in the dark of the
nights. It was erected in the blessed
memory of a Christian, whose entire life
was dedicated to follow the teachings
of our Lord Jesus and the progress
and welfare of this church. When
he went home to our heavenly Father for
his reward - those people who knew and
loved him, started a fund for some
kind of a memorial that would
fittingly preserve and maintain his
blessed memory in the future.
The fruit of this idea has become this
shining cross on the people!

I saw it shine last night and
was deeply impressed by it. I don't
know whether any other church in this
town has something like this. Permit
me to say a few words about it.

I often was wondering about the
fact, that the churches, all over the
world, are empty and dark during the
nights. It looked like the churches, visible
and open magnificent during the day,
when darkness comes, meekly go to sleep,
as if they would say to darkness:

"All right, the day and light was
mine all day - ^{I did my best} - ~~come and take over!~~
The night, the darkness is yours alone - do
your worst!



And darkness comes and all over the world really does its worst. Most of the criminal acts, the really great crimes are committed during the nights - covered by their greatest friends and protectors: darkness.

And I thought that something should be done by the churches to change this age-old custom. Half of the life of mankind is spent in darkness. Is it right, ~~to~~ to hand over the whole world to the Prince of Darkness, to do his evil work unhampered?

~~to~~ Our Lord Jesus said: "I am the light of the world: he who follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life (John 8:12) - And this means, that ^{for him} light is life itself - It means, that if light is life, darkness is nothing else but death.

The Bible many times speaks about light as the source and mainstay of life. Christ himself uses the word very often and when he says about himself that he is the light for the whole world - then he utters one of the greatest and most important truths about himself.

In other words it means that his followers must follow the light that comes from him, that Christians must generate light, when & wherever it is necessary.

And naturally: we need light when darkness surrounds us. In daylight it is fairly easy to find our way - but in darkness we instinctively know that we are in danger, and only some light can help us. And we are thinking not only about ourselves, but ^{about} others. The man stumbling in darkness, does well if he pays attention to a lamp, that shines in a dark place. our text says.

So when the idea of putting a cross on the church steeple was born - it was the realization of the fact, that the Church, the Christian truths are not sleeping even in the darkness of the night. The shining cross is a powerful reminder, to the people, who pass the church during the night - that even if the whole world seems to be enveloped by thick darkness, Christ is awake, holding high the shining torch to all those who are groping to find their way out of the deathly darkness.



And the people who see the shining cross, will be reminded of many other things also. They will be forced to think of that handful of Hungarian Christians, who placed that unique beacon on the steeple of their little church. This is a cosmopolitan town, composed of children of many nationalities. The Hungarian group among them is very small, but well known and respected. And I am certain that the population of the town appreciates and welcomes this idea. The respect of Hungarians is undoubtedly ~~the~~ ~~more~~ greater.

And the people will be - and indeed they are already reminded of a single, humble Hungarian, whom so many people have known and loved for over sixty years. a kindhearted, lovable man, in whose memory the beacon was installed, whose life was dedicated to the love of God, the love of his fellow man and the love of his church, whose loving care helped to found and maintain his church for more than 50 years. He never wanted praise or distinction. The grace of God was enough for him, together with the knowledge that he did not pray and work in vain - he brightened the little corner where he lived and giving

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good example ~~preaching~~, all his
life, not only to his own family
but everyone, made the
world a little better.

He is now peacefully resting on
the hill, above the town, among
his loved ones who finished their
earthly life before him. He is at
home there - just like he was
at home in his own house, and in
his beloved Church. He never even
dreamed that after he is gone, his
memory will live not only in
the hearts of his loved ones and
his fellow men, but in this unique
manner. What he preached,
not by words but by his life, will
be remembered for many years to
come by the shining light of his
memorial cross - Spreading the
light of Christ, the light of the world
~~through the~~ through the
darkness of every night, proclaiming
that Christ's light is more powerful
than the darkness of evil - and that
the victory in the struggle between good
and evil ~~will~~ someday will be
won by Christ and those men + women,
who try to follow him.



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Rest in peace, our beloved Christian brother. All of us, who were ~~so~~ fortunate to be your fellow co-workers, will heed the admonition of the Apostle Peter, who ~~also~~ wrote the words of our text:

"You will do well to pay attention to this, as to a ~~small~~ light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your heart."

Amen,

