

## God's Awesome Creation Dawn

Dawn's approach is slow; softly slipping lighter shades of grey and blue into night's deep darkness. Long before color, silhouettes emerge as trees, buildings, wires and hills come into focus and familiar landscapes reappear.

Tantalising fingers of brightness fan out, attaching red rosy hues to unsuspecting clouds. Only then, in the shimmering brilliance does the sun take command of the sky, exuding warmth, energy, and light. Its appearing renders redundant the lesser lights that stood guard during the night. Morning's arrival carries a gentle playfulness, a subtle sensitivity to our need for gradual awakening.

In the religious realm, it is Advent that alerts us that our source of life is close, readying us to receive the new life that will burst forth.

Long before the birth of Jesus, Isaiah, the prophet, knowing the power of the sun and foreseeing the power of the Son proclaimed to his people this message of hope. *The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness-on them light has shone... For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace* (Isaiah 9: 2,6).

Within the past 25 years there has been a new Advent, a new dawning on the Church's awareness of the need for a different relationship between humanity and the rest of creation. This awareness was reflected in Pope John Paul's proclamation in 1979 of St. Francis of Assisi as the heavenly Patron of those who promote ecology. Then in 1990 in his World Day of Peace Message, called, *Peace with God the Creator, Peace with All of Creation*", the Pope shed further light on the landscape of creation as effected by destructive human activity. He concluded his message by saying, *I should like to address directly my brothers and sisters in the Catholic Church, in order to remind them of their serious obligation to care for all of creation. The commitment of believers to a healthy environment for everyone stems directly from their belief in God the Creator, from their recognition of the effects of original and personal sin, and from the certainty of having been redeemed by Christ. Respect for life and for the dignity of the human person extends also to the rest of creation, which is called to join [people] in praising God (cf. Ps 148:96),*

A new day is dawning. Its worth waking up to see.

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