

“I have come to love the darkness”:

A practical guide for teaching the spirituality of Mother Teresa

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Abstract: The following is a practical, easily accessible, teaching guide for introducing the spirituality of one of the most admired persons of the 20th century, Mother Teresa. It extracts two sections from her recently released spiritual writings. In Mother Teresa’s own words, the first provides a summary of her spiritual journey. The second takes her to the edge of the deepest darkness of meaninglessness and loss of hope, to the very question of God’s existence. Following closely the two texts, the article gives a brief introduction to both Mother Teresa and St. John of the Cross, as well as notes on some of the more outstanding parts of the selections.

Introduction

Mother Teresa’s private spiritual writings, *Come Be My Light*¹ have been published for some time now and yet, in spite of the fact that she is so well known and often cited as a Christian of exemplary living, her legacy in writing is not being taught in Christian institutions with as much frequency and enthusiasm as one might expect. Perhaps the book is still very new, or perhaps instructors are not well versed in Mother Teresa’s spirituality of desolation, what St. John of the

¹ Mother Teresa, *Come Be My Light: The Private Writings of the “Saint of Calcutta”*, edited by Brian Kolodiejchuk, M. C., (Auckland: Doubleday, 2007). All further references to this work will be cited in the text itself, by page number only. **Text Extracts:** *Come be my Light* , available (accessed 12/12/09) <http://acts17verse28.blogspot.com/2009/06/come-be-my-light.html>

Cross (1542-1591) called the dark night of the soul. Or perhaps the book is just too large and one does not know where to begin.

Whatever the reason may be, *Come Be My Light* offers a wonderful opportunity to reach into the soul of – as well as teach a beautiful form of spirituality so well articulated by – one of the most admired persons of the 20th century.

As in the study of any classic, spiritual or otherwise – and there can be no doubt but that *Come Be My Light* will enter into the canon of spiritual classics – it is the text itself that is important. Students must read the text. Discussion must centre on the text. Instructors should have background information at their fingertips, but such detail should never take priority over the text.

Of course, the most important way for an instructor to prepare for such a class is to read, re-read, and read again the texts themselves. If there's time, read the book. The commentaries that follow may help, but should remain secondary to the inherent, intuitive message of Mother Teresa's own words.

For my own class, I combed the book for those texts I thought most accessible and exemplary. Of the hundreds of entries collected in Mother Teresa's spiritual autobiography, I chose but two, pages 192-194 and 209-212, numbering the lines for easier reference in class. I used both, but depending on time, either or both can be introduced in class.

This article I have divided into two sections as well: The chosen texts and commentary on the texts. The best way I've discovered of teaching a given passage is to simply allow students five minutes to read it, then begin the discussion. No introduction is necessary. Even the authorship of the text can be left as a surprise. Instructors can subsequently provide background information from the commentary as questions arise.

Finally, the titles I've placed above the two chosen entries come from the chapter headings. "How painful the unknown pain" (pp. 192-194) is perhaps the more powerful and comes earlier in the book, but "I have come to love the darkness" (pp. 209-212) provides a better summary of Mother Teresa's spiritual journey, as well as an introduction to the birth and life of the order she founded and so it would appear best to start with it.

I have come to love the darkness

Title: Although not specifically structured thus, the way I read *Come Be My Light* it is divided into three parts. In the first third Fr. Brian Kolodiejchuk, M. C., postulator for the cause of Mother Teresa's sainthood, is as much co-author as editor. He contextualizes Gonxha Agnes Bojaxhiu's early spiritual life, her entry into the Loreto Sisters, her private vow to Jesus in 1942 (see line 29 of her text below), and the mystical experience of her famous call within a call on a train from Calcutta to Darjeeling on Sept. 10, 1946 (see lines 1-2 below).

In the second third of the book, the editor's voice recedes somewhat and the writings of Mother Teresa become a litany of lament. Unable to express herself in person, Mother Teresa now writes to her spiritual directors of the terrible darkness within, as if all were dead (p. 149); of the torture of loneliness (p. 134); "How long will our Lord stay away?" (p. 158). "The more I want him," she laments, "the less I am wanted" (p. 164). He has destroyed everything in me" (p. 192). She speaks of a great agony of desolation, of separation, of terrible emptiness (p. 165). Everything is icy cold (p. 163); the longing for the Absent One so deep (p. 165). Holy Communion and Mass are empty (p. 232). The second selection, "How painful the unknown pain," comes from the second third of the book.

This first selection, "I have come to love the darkness", on the other hand, comes from the last third of the book. In this particular passage, Mother Teresa has not yet rejoiced in the darkness – that will happen a few pages later – but the instructor may want to be able

to cite where she does. Most probably written on April, 11 1961 to her spiritual director, Jesuit Father Joseph Neuner, Mother Teresa says:

“I can’t express in words – the gratitude I owe you for your kindness to me. – For the first time in this 11 years – I have come to love the darkness. – For I believe now that it is a part, a very, very small part of Jesus’ darkness & pain on earth. You have taught me to accept it [as] a “spiritual side of ‘your work’” as you wrote. – Today really I felt a deep joy – that Jesus can’t go anymore through the agony – but that He wants to go through it in me. – More than ever I surrender myself to Him. – Yes – more than ever I will be at His disposal (p. 214).

The impenetrable darkness of the first two thirds of the book does not cease, but Mother Teresa’s torment will now give way to an inner peace, even joy. The abandoned, unwanted, unloved poor reflects not only the sufferings of Jesus, but the very soul of Mother Teresa. She loves the darkness because through her sufferings she is united with the poor and Jesus himself.

Line 1: **Father:** Addressed to the same Fr. Joseph Neuner.

Loreto: Born Agnes Gonxha Bojaxhiu 26 August, 1910 in Skopje, Macedonia, at the age of 18 the future Mother Teresa answered the call to join the teaching and missionary Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary – the Loreto Sisters – where she took the name “Teresa” after St. Thérèse of Lisieux.

Lines 1- 2: **The call; the voice was clear & full of conviction:** Mother Teresa – as she will be known after taking her final vows in 1937 – will happily remain with the Loreto Sisters in India until her famous ‘call within a call’. On Sept 10, 1946, while traveling by train from Calcutta to a retreat house in Darjeeling, she will have what can only be understood as an authentic religious experience, a sudden, unexpected series of visions and interior locutions that would continue throughout that year and into the next: “I want Indian Nuns, Missionaries of Charity, who would be my fire of love amongst the poor, the sick, the dying and the little children....There are plenty of Nuns to look after the rich and well to do people – but for My very poor, there are absolutely none. For them I long – them I love. Wilt thou refuse? ... My little one – come – come – carry me into the holes

of the poor. – Come be My light” (p.98; cf also Mother Teresa’s account of her visions on p. 99).

Lines 3, 9: **Fear and terrible feelings; sweetness & consolation & union:** Although a time of intimacy with Jesus, Mother Teresa also had her doubts. Might they be false spirits? she asks herself. And what if, having left her happy life with the Loreto Sisters, she were to experience only ridicule, loneliness and failure? (cf. pp. 131 ff.).

Line 7: **Asansol:** a town about 140 miles northwest of Calcutta. Kolodiejchuk explains that about the time that Mother Teresa was formally asking Ferdinand Pèrier, S. J., archbishop of Calcutta, for approval to begin a new order of sisters, some of the Loreto sisters had noticed she was spending an inordinate amount of time in the confessional with her then spiritual advisor, Fr. Van Exem, S. J. “On the basis of these ‘uncharitable suggestions and remarks,’” Kolodiejchuk notes, “the decision was made to transfer Mother Teresa to the Asansol community” (p. 55). After her arrival in mid-January Mother Teresa took up her teaching job, but had more time to pray, and beseech the archbishop in letter to allow her to proceed with her call to found an order of sisters.

Line 11: **the work:** Mother Teresa will leave the Loreto sisters in 1948 and, after a brief course in nursing, begin her work with the poor of Calcutta. Although she would not gain permission to begin her order until October 7, 1950, volunteers will join her almost immediately. See lines 1-2 above and 35 below: “The work” was something God had asked Mother to do. It was His work, not hers.

Line 14ff: **untold darkness:** Soon after beginning the work in 1948 the visions and locutions ceased and Mother Teresa moved into what John of the Cross called the dark night of the soul. See my notes below for a rudimentary **introduction to St. John of the Cross’ dark night** spirituality.

This “negative experience of God” should by now be recognizable to senior high school students and adults through their study of Sacred Scripture. Familiar biblical texts include

such psalms of lament as 22 (“My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?”; cf Mt 27:46) and 88 (which ends with the very word ‘darkness’); Jeremiah 20: 7ff (“Cursed be the day I was born”) and 31:15 (the lament of Rachael, for her children are no more; cf Mt 2:18); Isaiah 53 (the suffering servant); the Book of Lamentations and, of course, the Book of Job.

In spite of the fact that such classical texts are well-known – and that the symbol *par excellence* of Christianity is a bloody Christ on a cross – I have found, nevertheless, that students have not thought through the concept that God can be experienced as darkness, as suffering. For this reason Mother Teresa’s text is ideal to introduce students to the Christian spiritual tradition of the dark night.

At any point in the article, a student may begin to feel something of an affinity toward the sufferings of Mother Teresa. As teachers we should encourage this. It is true that so much of suffering we cause ourselves (the hangover is the easy example), but there exists a great deal of suffering which we are simply born into or fall victim of.

Moreover, students should be encouraged to seek the silent, distant God through their unmerited suffering. The dark night is commonly thought to be a spiritual battle reserved for saints – not for the likes of you, me or our young-adult students. It should not be. Perhaps Mother Teresa, St. John of the Cross, Jeremiah and Jesus himself experienced it much more intensely, but the phenomenon is probably more universal than we might at first recognize. “We’ve had the experience,” 20th century English poet T. S. Eliot says, “but have missed the meaning”.² Psychiatrist Gerald G. May, who has explored the relationship between the dark night and psychology, opines that, though many people do experience the phenomenon, they don’t recognize it.³ One of the main purposes of the exercise of reading Mother Teresa’s work is to begin to first, help students recognize the experience of dark night in their own lives and secondly, understand that experience of suffering through the writings of Mother Teresa.

² T. S. Eliot, *Four Quartets* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1971), p. 39.

³ G. G. May, *The Dark Night of the Soul: A Psychiatrist Explores the Connection Between Darkness and Spiritual Growth* (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 2004).

Lines 24-25: **Holy Communion:** It is important to point out that our reception of the sacraments – or resolve to commitments in general (the marriage vow comes easily to mind) – are not so much based upon feelings, but upon the will, decision. Mother Teresa exemplifies this determination of the will.

See also “How painful the unknown pain” lines 20-27 as well as *Come Be My Light*, p. 232.

Line 29: **about 17 years now....:** In April, 1942, at the age of 32, and six years before she would leave the Loreto Sisters to begin ‘the work’ of the Missionaries of Charity, Mother Teresa made an exceptional vow, ‘binding under pain of mortal sin, to give to God anything that He may ask, ‘Not to refuse Him anything’” (p. 29). This vow would mark a milestone in Mother Teresa’s life, giving her direction even in the darkest years. Just a few days before her death, on Sept 5, 1997 she was able to say in prayer, “Jesus, I have never refused you anything” (p. 331).

Line 37: **teach the Sisters:** Mother Teresa will eventually come to realize that it is this very suffering – which unites her to both the poor and to Jesus – that sets her and her sisters apart from social workers. In a general letter to her sisters in July, 1961 she writes: “My dear children – without our suffering, our work would just be social work, very good and helpful, but it would not be the work of Jesus Christ, not part of the redemption.... Yes, my dear children – let us share the sufferings – of our Poor – for only by being one with them – we can redeem them, that is, bringing God into their lives and bringing them to God” (p. 220).

Line 49: **Teach me to love God:** the first and most important commandment (Dt 6:5; Mt 22:37). All else, including love of neighbor, flows from it.

Line 72: **To be at His disposal:** See line 29 above. This is the most fundamental of all decisions for a Christian. See, for example, Mt 6:10: “Your will be done”; Mt 26:39: “My

Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not as I will but as you will”; and Lk 1:38: “May it be done to me according to your word”.

Line 74: **If my darkness is light to some soul:** One of the most consoling words of Mother Teresa for us who are left behind in this vale of tears is her promise of intercessory prayer. In a letter to Fr. Neuner, March 6, 1962, she writes: “If I ever become a saint – I will surely be one of ‘darkness.’ I will continually be absent from heaven – to light the light of those in darkness on earth” (p. 230).

Line 76: **God’s flower of the field:** Mother’s namesake, Thérèse of Lisieux, renown for her simple spirituality of the “little way,” was also known as the Little Flower of Jesus.⁴

How painful the unknown pain

Line 3: **My own Jesus:** Editor Fr. Brian Kolodiejchuk points out that Mother Teresa was not able to express herself well even to those she trusted most, which may have exasperated her sense of isolation. When writing a letter directly to Jesus, nevertheless, Kolodiejchuk opines, she was able to communicate with ease (p. 192). What follows in this selection from her spiritual autobiography is a letter to Jesus, sent in a missive on Sept. 3, 1959 to her then spiritual director Father Picachy. Mother Teresa had met Fr. Lawrence Trevor Picachy, S. J., future archbishop of Calcutta, during a retreat he had led in April, 1956.

Before going any further, however, a rudimentary **introduction to St. John of the Cross’ dark night** spirituality may be opportune.⁵

⁴ Therese, Saint (Theresa of Lisieux), *The Columbia Encyclopedia*, sixth edition (2001-2007), <http://www.bartleby.com/65/th/TheresaL.html> (retrieved 10 July 2008).

⁵ I have expanded the ideas from this section on John of the Cross’s dark night in an earlier article: “Void, Gap, *Nada*: St. John of the Cross’s ‘Dark Night of the Soul’ in James K. Baxter’s Jerusalem Works”. *Stimulus: The New Zealand Journal of Christian Thought and Practice* 14.2 (May 2006), pp. 24-32, here 24-26. For a book-length introduction to John of the Cross’s life and works see G. Brennan, *St. John of the Cross; His Life and Poetry* (Cambridge: Cambridge

Born Juan de Yepes y Álvarez in the small town of Fontiveros near Avila, at the age of 21 John of the Cross joined the monastic order of the Carmelites and, with the encouragement of Theresa of Avila, soon set out to reform it. At the age of 34, imprisoned by those not keen on the reform, John survived some nine months on meager rations in a small, dark, damp room that at one point had served as a toilet. He may have been tortured; he certainly suffered malnutrition, and was given little in the way of clothes to combat the winter cold. It was during this time in the belly of the whale that John composed his now famous poem that begins with 'On a dark night'. After his escape to a more amiable Carmelite monastery, the monks urged John to write a commentary on the poem. The result was *The Ascent of Mount Carmel* and *Dark Night of the Soul*, both of which comment on the eight-stanza poem as well as synthesize John's wisdom as confessor and spiritual director.⁶

St. John of the Cross accepted, with little alteration, the then current Scholastic understanding of the soul as composed of the senses and the spirit.⁷ The senses consisted of sight, hearing, taste, touch, and smell. The spirit, on the other hand, consisted of the intellect, the memory and the will which, in turn, through the grace of God, corresponded to the three theological virtues of faith, hope and love.

Given the structure of the soul, then, St. John of the Cross will speak of the soul's journey to God as two nights: that of the sense and that of the spirit. He then subdivides each night once again into the active and passive phases. Through meditation the sojourner has some control over the active nights of sense and spirit, but only God, through contemplation, can achieve the greater purification of the soul through the passive nights of sense and spirit.

University Press, 1973). For a briefer introduction, see M. Starr's 'Introduction', in St. John of the Cross, *Dark Night of the Soul*, tr. by M. Starr (London: Rider, 2002), pp. 1-25.

⁶ Both the poem itself and the two commentaries are available on the Carmelite website: <http://www.carmelite.com/saints/john/b4.shtml> (retrieved 10 July 2008).

⁷ For a more thorough account of St. John's understanding of the soul see S. Payne, *John of the Cross and the Cognitive Value of Mysticism: An Analysis of Sanjuanist Teaching and its Philosophical Implications for Contemporary Discussions of Mystical Experience* (London: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1990), pp. 16-49.

Mother Teresa must have known she was going through the dark night. Besides her many references to darkness, she mentions the “dark night of the birth of the Society” (p. 134) and explicitly states that she had read the great medieval mystic (p. 265). It should be remembered as well that St. Thérèse of Lisieux was a Carmelite like John of the Cross himself.

Regardless of how much she knew of the details of St. John’s spirituality, however, the following two paragraphs of this selection – questioning the very existence of God and the inability to pray – do appear to reflect the passive nights of the spirit and sense, those phases that only God can initiate.⁸

Lines 8-18: **God really not existing; no hope:** One of the best examples of Mother Teresa’s articulation of her dark night experience. Moreover, it would appear that, according to St. John’s categories, Mother Teresa is passing through the last, most profound stage of the journey, that which John of the Cross’s commentaries are best known for.⁹ He speaks of the passive night of spirit as “affliction and torment”;¹⁰ as “the miseries of imperfections, aridities and voids in the apprehensions of the faculties and an abandonment of the spirit in darkness”.¹¹ The hand of God is “heavy and contrary”,¹² the Spanish mystic tells us. He assails the soul,¹³ the soul feels as if God had abandoned it, and, in His abhorrence of it, cast it into darkness.¹⁴ Likening it to Jonas in the beast of the

⁸ In logical order, the passive night of the spirit follows that of sense. Mother’s letter, however, does not necessarily follow chronology. Moreover, although medieval scholasticism made distinctions between various parts or functions of the soul, still it considered the soul one integral entity. By the same token, although St. John spoke of the soul’s journey in four phases, he considered them but aspects of one night. In fact, the various phases often occurred simultaneously, in dialectical fashion, the change in one effecting a change in the others.

⁹ *Dark Night of the Soul*, book II, especially chapters 3-8.

¹⁰ *Dark Night of the Soul*, book II, chapter 5, paragraph 2.

¹¹ *Dark Night of the Soul*, book II, chapter 6, paragraph 4.

¹² *Dark Night of the Soul*, book II, chapter 5, paragraph 7.

¹³ *Dark Night of the Soul*, book II, chapter 5, paragraph 5; cf. chapter 6, paragraph 1.

¹⁴ *Dark Night of the Soul*, book II, chapter 6, paragraph 2.

sea, St. John relates that the soul “at the sight of its miseries feels that it is melting away and being undone by a cruel spiritual death”.¹⁵

St. John makes it clear that, although many souls may experience other phases, few traverse the horrors of this last passive night of spirit. Mother Teresa appears to have. In fact, unlike the experience of St. John of the Cross, and except for a very brief period upon the death of Pope Pius XII in Oct., 1958 (p.177), she seems to have remained in the dark night throughout her entire life.

Commentators will say that it is not uncommon for those going through the dark night to have doubts regarding the very existence of God.¹⁶ Such radical doubt may be a change from St. John’s era when a universe without God was inconceivable; medieval mystics may have experienced the denial of God’s graces, even reprobation and abandonment, but not the disbelief of the modern age.

In her article on “The Dark Night of Mother Teresa” Carol Zaleski points out that Mother’s doubts, on the other hand, “gave her access to the deepest poverty of the modern world: the poverty of meaninglessness and loneliness.”¹⁷ In this sense, then, Mother Teresa was a quintessentially 20th century person. She felt the hopelessness of the age as perhaps no other has. (Hope too must be purified by the dark night; see lines 29 ff. below.)

And yet she still remained faithful to God, to her promise “to be at his disposal”. Zaleski adds that having endured the trial, Mother bore witness “to the fidelity for which the world is starving.”¹⁸

¹⁵ *Dark Night of the Soul*, chapter 6, paragraph 1.

¹⁶ See May, p. 173, cf. 90; Payne, p. 75.

¹⁷ Carol Zaleski, “The Dark Night of Mother Teresa,” http://www.firstthings.com/article.php3?id_article=486 (retrieved 07 July 2008).

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

Line 16: **then Jesus – You also are not true:** Note the irony of Mother Teresa’s doubt concerning the truth of Jesus himself expressed in a prayer to Jesus himself. Spirituality, like human nature in general, never has been consistent, and we shouldn’t expect it to be; our actions do not always follow logically from our thoughts, and least ways from our doubts. We pray in spite of – or perhaps because of – our doubts. The young Elie Wiesel, the future Nobel laureate, perhaps expressed it best: In the midst of the horrors of the concentration camps, he writes that “in spite of myself, a prayer rose in my heart, to that God in whom I no longer believed.”¹⁹

Lines 20-27: **I don’t pray any longer; I talk to you for hours:** There can be little doubt from this paragraph that Mother is experiencing what John of the Cross labeled the passive night of sense. In order to differentiate this passive night from the consequences of sin, weakness, laziness or “some bad humor or bodily indisposition”²⁰ – what today might be called psychological illness – St. John gives three signs of a transition into the passive night of sense. In summary fashion, and as ironic as they may appear, the surest signs that someone like Mother Teresa has passed into this next phase of the spiritual journey are that 1) she cannot pray, 2) she doesn’t want to pray, yet 3) she wants to be with God.²¹ Prayer which had always involved the senses and the imagination no longer satisfies. Mother Teresa now simply desires solitude in God’s presence. In fact, Mother’s account here of the dryness in prayer yet longing for God could well be a classic illustration of St. John’s passive night of sense.

See also “I have come to love the darkness”, lines 24-25.

Lines 29ff: **the work:** see “I have come to love the darkness”, line 11 above.

No joy, no attraction, no zeal: see also line 17, **no hope;** as well as lines 33-34: **no faith:** As St. John of the Cross and all the great mystics have come to realize, material poverty is but a starting point, a bridge to spiritual dispossession, that which will allow

¹⁹ Elie Wiesel, *Night*, tr. by Stela Rodway, (Auckland: Bantam Books, 1982), p. 87.

²⁰ *Dark Night of the Soul*, book I, chapter 9, paragraph 1.

²¹ *Ascent of Mt. Carmel*, book II, chapter 13, paragraphs 2 – 4; cf. also *Dark Night of the Soul*, book I, chapter 9, paragraphs 2-9.

the soul to ultimately live the purity of the theological virtues. The apparent loss of the theological virtues is a classic representation of the passive stages of the dark night as well.

In reference to St. John of the Cross, in his *Four Quartets*, T. S. Eliot, speaks of the negation of the theological virtues in this way:

I said to my soul, be still, and wait without hope
For hope would be hope for the wrong thing; wait without love
For love would be love of the wrong thing; there is yet faith
But the faith and the love and the hope are all in the waiting.²²

Even the foundation of Christian spirituality – faith, hope and love – must be purified by the dark night. Mother Teresa now awaits that purification in the abandonment, the darkness, for as long as it may please God, even throughout eternity (see line 55 below).

Line 37: **the call**: see “I have come to love the darkness”, lines 1-2 above.

Line 41: **Imprint on my soul and life the sufferings of Your Heart**: A reference to the Sacred Heart of Jesus; also the center of Mother Teresa’s dark night spirituality: Her only love is Jesus, whom she must know through the union of both his sufferings and those of the poor. See “I have come to love the darkness”, line 14 and 37 above as well as Line 47 below.

Line 47: **satiating Your Thirst**: In all of the Missionary of Charity chapels throughout the world, above the altar, and often in letters too large for the aesthetically conscious liturgist, is written the words “I thirst”. The quote, taken from Jesus’ cry on the cross (Jn 19:28) summarizes Mother’s spirituality as well. She offers all her sufferings to the crucified Christ to satiate his thirst. As she prays elsewhere in an undated letter to Jesus concerning the darkness, the emptiness, and her longing for God, “If this brings You glory, if You get a drop of joy from all this – if souls are brought to You – if my

²² Eliot, p. 28.

sufferings satiates Your Thirst – here I am Lord, with joy I accept all to the end of life – & I will smile at Your Hidden Face – always” (p. 188).

Line 52-53: do not take the trouble to return soon. – I am ready to wait for You for all eternity: The great hope of Christianity as expressed in the third part of the memorial acclamation in the Roman Catholic order of the mass, “... Christ will come again,” or in Revelations, “*Maranatha*; Come Lord Jesus” (22:20; cf 1Cor 16:22), when there will finally be justice, a new heavens and a new earth (Rev 21:1). Mother Teresa is saying that she is willing to suffer for Christ for as long as he asks; she has promised and is willing to give him everything.

Mother Teresa’s view of death gives insight into her spirituality as well. She longed for death; she longed for God (p. 263). Yet she was willing to continue her dark night even after death if this is what God wanted, if such suffering would help others. Given this context, it is worth repeating the commentary on line 74 of the first passage: In a letter to Fr. Neuner, March 6, 1962, she wrote: “If I ever become a saint – I will surely be one of ‘darkness.’ I will continually be absent from heaven – to light the light of those in darkness on earth” (p. 230).

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