

Let Life Shine

It was 7:00 in the evening on a clear summer day. The sun began to set, casting its rays over the treetops and onto the fields below. The few wispy clouds were splashed with pink. It was as if that small part of the world was aflame with light from the sun. In the same way, life should be allowed to shine.

When babies are born, “shining” may not be the first adjective that comes to mind. Giving birth is very painful. However, immediately after the baby is born, it takes only one look at the mother to see her face radiating with joy and gladness. That one life, the life of the baby, has already touched another person, just like the sun touched the fields and trees around it.

As the baby grows into a toddler and says his first words, his parents derive joy from every new achievement. The young child continues to grow and eventually can talk more easily. He seems to consider it his duty to make friends with everyone. People stop to exclaim over him and laugh at every cute and cunning word he says. Think of all the lives he has just brought pleasure to. Those people would never have had that privilege if that child had been prevented from living.

The child grows into an adult. He continues to affect other’s lives, no matter his vocation. A single person can often bring great joy into the lives of his nieces and nephews. If he doesn’t have any, single people often are great councilors, educators, and friends. In marriage, he can brighten his spouse’s and children’s lives, providing for them, helping them, and caring for them. Someone once told me that religious seem to radiate joy. They have dedicated their entire lives to God in a special way and are living out the highest vocation. Because of this great privilege, many appear to have a shining countenance.

The adult gets old and retires. Many times the elderly bring joy into children's lives by telling them stories and giving them gifts, especially homemade cookies. They can have a lot of influence over children, helping form them into holy men and women.

It is now eight o'clock. The sun is long gone. However, there lingers in our minds and hearts the memory of the sunset, its warmth and radiance. In a short period of time, it shone brilliantly on a small portion of the world. Let us cherish all life at all stages, letting life shine.