



St. Matthew's Cathedral eNews

Christ + Compassion + Community

From the Dean

Light Deprivation Syndrome

"Let there be light." Genesis 1:2

We finally saw the sun on Sunday after over a week of overcast skies. Many of us feel a little "down" when we go for days without seeing the sun. An actual malady of this sort has been called "Light Deprivation Syndrome."

Our need for light is quite amazing. I have a college friend who is a family doctor in Hood, Oregon. He says that Light Deprivation Syndrome is a particular problem in the northwest. In fact, he says that he has a marked increase of patients asking for anti-depressants from September through March of each year.

We live in a world where there seems to be increasingly more and more bad news. Interestingly, though, is how we often don't get the memo of the Good News that is out there, and how sometimes we create our own bad news.

Although there are many things we can't control, there are a number of things we can.

For example, did you know that world hunger has actually *decreased* over the past 20 years. Oh, and by the way, it has decreased by about 60%?

One study asked the question why religious people are happier than non-religious people. Here are their three major findings:

- Religious people tend to have closer relationships and report more life satisfaction than non-religious or marginally religious people.
- People who go to their places of worship often tend to be happier than those who go less often or not at all.
- Sharing a bond over meaningful beliefs helps boost well-being.

The author of the report said they found that "religious people tend to volunteer more, care more about their community and do more good in their neighborhoods."

Hmm, how does the light in your life stack up?

