



I will always hold the greatest esteem and gratitude in my heart for the inventor of the nightlight. Maybe not everyone can understand the feeling, but then again, not every five-year-old kid has had an upstairs bedroom all to himself. I had my own room on the second floor. That left me with a tough assignment. Each night at bedtime I had to run up a dark staircase in order to make it safely to my room without being caught by whatever monster or boogeyman that surely waited to attack me. Once I got into my room, safety. My nightlight was on.

Why does light in darkness mean so much? What difference does it make? Well, a lighthouse on a stormy night warns ships so they don't break on the shore and gives hope to sailors that land is near. The light at the end of the tunnel keeps our eyes on the goal—yes, we can reach it!

Light means hope, strength to keep going, security. *In the beginning was the Word... the life was the light of the world. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not overcome it.*

Everyone needs a nightlight to see them through dark times, for comfort and hope. For Catholics, our "nightlight" *par excellence* is the sanctuary lamp: it signals a security, a promise, a Presence.