

With ISIS Rising in Europe, Queen Elizabeth Boldly Declares Faith in Christ

Britain's Queen Elizabeth focused on what she called the light of the Christian faith in her annual Christmas message on Friday, after a year marked by militant Islamist attacks across the world.

Elizabeth, 89, the head of the Church of England, quoted the Bible and spoke of millions of people lighting candles of hope.

"It is true," she said, "that the world has had to confront moments of darkness this year, but the Gospel of John contains a verse of great hope, often read at Christmas carol services: 'The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it.'"

Elizabeth, who overtook her great, great grandmother Queen Victoria this year to become Britain's longest-reigning monarch, recorded the message earlier this month at Buckingham Palace, her London residence.

She did not make direct reference to Islamist attacks in 2015, which included two in Paris killing some 150 people and a beach massacre of tourists in Tunisia in June in which 38 people died, most of them British.

But she reminded her audience that Christianity's unchanging message "was not one of revenge or violence but simply that we should love one another."

She added: "There's an old saying that it is better to light a candle than curse the darkness."

Seated in front of a Christmas tree as she delivered the

latest in a long line of seasonal royal messages that date back to George V in 1932, the queen, who turns 90 in April, reflected on her reign of over 63 years.

“One of the joys of living a long life is watching one’s children, then grandchildren, then great-grandchildren, help decorate the Christmas tree,” she said.

“And this year my family has a new member to join the fun,” she added, referring to her fifth great-grandchild, Princess Charlotte, who was born in May to her grandson Prince William and his wife Kate.

“Gathering round the tree gives us a chance to think about the year ahead – I am looking forward to a busy 2016, though I have been warned I may have ‘Happy Birthday’ sung to me more than once or twice.”

She concluded: “There are millions of people lighting candles of hope in our world today. Christmas is a good time to be thankful for them and for all that brings light to our lives.”

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