Explore the Theme — O Holy Darkness!

Rosemary Mangan, RJM invites us to ponder the gift of darkness as the Northern Hemisphere marks its Winter Solstice & the global church bids Radiant Dawn to come.

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The light of the Sun begins a new solar cycle at Winter Solstice. The rays shine into the dark, and nurture the newborn life there to be cultivated. And this is mirrored in nature, as the seeds are buried in the darkness of the Earth, to emerge once again with the life-giving rays of the Sun. Winter Solstice 2021 in the Northern Hemisphere will be on Tuesday, December 21, marking the season when we experience the longest and darkest nights of the year and the shortest days with the least amount of daylight. In winter everything lies dormant in the silent earth, it is a sacred time of rest and reflection before the awakening and the slow build toward brighter days.

“Can we receive the darkness of this empty time and barren space, personally and collectively, as the love and care of God in our lives desiring to purify our desire as persons and our national dream[s] as a people?”

Constance FitzGerald, OCD, “The Desire for God and the Transformative Power of Contemplation,” Desire, Darkness and Hope

Beyond saying sweet, past telling of tongue,
The art lightning and love, I found it, a winter and warm;
Father and fondler of heart thou hast wrung:
Hast thy dark descending and most art merciful then.”
The Wreck of the Deutschland by GM Hopkins

“Eye Mask” by Denise Levertov

In this dark I rest,
unready for the light which dawns
day after day,
eager to be shared.
Black silk, shelter me.
I need
more of the night before I open
eyes and heart
to illumination. I must still
grow in the dark like a root
not ready, not ready at all.

LISTEN: “Holy Darkness,” Dan Schutte, © 2012 OCP. All rights reserved. All selections BMI: https://www.youtube.com/

O Holy Darkness! empty, barren presence:

Come,
and cover the seeds
of our faith & hope
with your consoling love