

## Explore the Theme — O Holy Darkness!

Rosemary Mangah, 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.

Beyond saying sweet, past telling of tongue,  
Thou 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.

“This [a time of darkness, waiting, impasse] is actually a hopeful time when theological faith, hope and love, the gifts of God, are being accessed. We are forced, as it were, to accept the alternative vision of faith, hope and love and so pass over into the perspective of God. The question is this:

**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*



**LISTEN:** “Holy Darkness,” Dan Schutte, © 2012 OCP. All rights reserved.

All selections BMI: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ShvQQR0zwWg>

**O Holy Darkness!**  
empty, barren presence:

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