

HOLY DARKNESS:

ENCOMPASSED BY THE LOVE THAT KNOWS YOUR NAME



A Blessing for Traveling in the Dark

Go slow
if you can.
Slower.
More slowly still.
Friendly dark
or fearsome,

this is no place
to break your neck
by rushing,
by running,
by crashing into
what you cannot see.

...

I do not know
what these shadows
ask of you,
what they might hold
that means you good
or ill.
It is not for me
to reckon
whether you should linger
or you should leave.
But this is what
I can ask for you:

That in the darkness
there be a blessing.
That in the shadows
there be a welcome.
That in the night
you be encompassed
by the Love that knows
your name.

—Jan Richardson

What matters to Meister Eckhart is not what separates us from God,
but what in us is most like God ... What is it in us that is God's image and likeness?

For if we are drawn to God, this Silent Abyss, it is because there is something in us that
corresponds to it, a Ground of the soul, a me beyond me.

The nameless depths in me cries out to the Nameless Depths in God. Living in communion
with this Silent Depth profoundly affects our sense of ourselves and what it means to be a
human person.

Cyprian Smith, *The Way of Paradox*



Cathie Meighan, SSJ

*So dark the night!
At rest and hushed my house
I went with no one knowing
upon a lover's quest ...*

John of the Cross

these moments, to your astonishment, you helped another most or did your most
fruitful work. When our ego is humbled and not obstructing, God's creative Spirit can
often have freer play. Like the bare trees, it may be that we allow God's glory to shine
through at these times more purely than in our summer prosperity. God seems to like
this pattern!

—Maria Boulding, OSB

In the lives of those who believe and
pray, there are bleak winters of the
spirit. In these times of personal or
communal darkness, we are called to
wait with heroic hope in God's power
and creative love.

Advent is the consecration of waiting in
our lives. Human life is full of waiting ...
Faith can demand long patient waiting
when nothing seems to be happening.

We go on doing the small, ordinary
things of daily life while we wait for Go,
as Mary did when she waited for the
birth of Jesus. And as we wait for God
to breakthrough, we are invited to take
a liminal question into our hearts and
ponder it for a season or longer.

These winters of the spirit are hard to
live through. And yet it may be that in

PRACTICE LIVING IN COMMUNION WITH THIS SILENT DEPTH.

How do you experience Advent or this time of your life as a time of waiting? What are you waiting for? What would it mean to consecrate waiting?

Share a time when you experienced a 'winter of the Spirit'? Do you remember what it was like? How it ended? What you learned?

As you contemplatively behold the darkness and light in your personal life or in our societal or communal life, what liminal questions might you hold as you cross the threshold to this new year? Is there one question you would like to hold and ponder over the coming year?