**Darkness is the way we come to see – Sr. Joan Chittister**

Darkness, I have discovered, is the way we come to see. It creates the depressions that, once faced, teach us to trust. It gives us the sensitivity it takes to understand the depth of the pain in others. It seeds in us the humility it takes to learn to live gently with the rest of the universe. It opens us to new possibilities within ourselves.

Darkness is a very spiritual thing.

…When we have survived our own cross, risen alive from the grave of despair, we begin to know that we can survive again and again and again, whatever life sends us in the future. It is this hope that carries us from stage to stage in life, singing and dancing around dark corners.

But hope is not a private virtue. Hope makes us witness to the invincibility of the spirit. The hope we bring to others becomes the one sure gift we have to give to those in pain.

The God of the Dance beckons us out of the caves of the soul to faith and trust and new beginnings. It’s when we get trapped in the past—in its details, and its shame, and its narrow boxes and short leashes—that life stops for us. When life is defined for us by others, we limit our sense of ourselves. Then we dismiss the God of Possibility from our lives. We refuse to become the more that we are. We sit on the dung heap of our past and make it our present. We fail to believe that God is. That God is in us. That God is calling us out of the darkness into the light.

Darkness is one of the ways to God, provided we see it as leading to the light. Provided we don’t turn it into the death of our own soul.

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