



Rest In Me

Session Notes

July - October 2020

What Each Session Includes...

- We transition from the day's events with quiet discussion as everyone joins. How is God working in My Life Today?
- We Enter the Silence with a Breathing Prayer, or Chant
- Rest
- Breathe
- Center
- ... *Thoughts may come*
- Silence
- Chime
- Quiet Sharing, Followed by More Group Discussion
- Closing & Resources

Integrating Session Topics with the Practice of Silence

Specific topics with accompanying resources are prepared ahead of time for each week of the series. These are used as a secondary resources.

Because our practice is created to open our hearts to the messages of God and the Holy Spirit may bring, the quiet sharing will start with individuals sharing their experience or any topics coming up for them. This is voluntary, Anyone may speak, or pass.

Once that sharing is complete, the group will decide whether to continue on one of the topics that came up during the initial sharing, or move to the prepared topic.

Why we Start with "Love" as the first topic.

We Love Because He First Loved Us ~1 John 4:19



Teacher, which commandment is the most important?
Jesus answered:

"Love the Lord Your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it. Love your neighbor as yourself"

~Matthew 22:37-38 2



Rest In Me

Session XI “The Power of Silence, Day 3”

21 September 2020

Why we Enter the Silence with a Breathing Prayer, or Chant

We will begin our experience with a breathing prayer, a chant. Our breath will connect us bodily with the divine nature of the Sacred One Being that is the source of all breath. Sacred chanting is universally honored and acknowledged in the great spiritual traditions because it moves energy out of the head, into the heart. Many people have absorbed criticism about their voices – “your voice is no good, you can’t sing on pitch” – and have learned to shut down their true voices. The same things that make us protect and cover up our true voices, and therefore also cover up our hearing are the same things that make us shut down and cover up our true self, our hearing to life, and our hearing to God...As we learn we can do it, as we are willing to work through those old messages, a whole new field of healing and reconciliation opens up for us. God is breath. All that breathes resides in the Sacred One Being. From my breath to the air we share, to the wind that blows around the planet, Sacred Unity inspires us all. *God is Spirit and His worshipers must worship in the spirit and in truth.* ~ Jn 4:24

Rest

Lie or sit comfortably for a few minutes, feet shoulder width apart, and place one hand lightly over the heart. Without trying to change anything, simply notice the breath. There are many different moments in the breath’s journey; the feeling of it as it begins to come in, when it approaches fullness, as it briefly turns over, and then, when it begins to go out, when it approaches emptiness, and when it turns over again.

Breathe

Take a few deep, slow breaths, and let all the ideas, thoughts, and conversations swirling around in your head flow out of you as you exhale. Breathe slowly and deeply and you will relax ...slowly and deeply. At each twist and turn of the breath’s journey, our bodies respond in a particular way. We may also notice a presence or absence of sensation, thought, or emotion at a particular stage. We may feel that we want to stay longer in one part of the journey than another – the beginning, the middle, or the end. Simply notice all of these sensations without judgement for a few minutes. Now without particular awareness, take 5 deep and slow breaths. This awareness is not in the mind, it is in the heart

Center

Allow your attention to be in the core of your physical body, in your heart space.

There is spaciousness here to hold all your thoughts in loving awareness and without the need for the mind to cling to them. This space is receptive of a wide spectrum of energy that is not available to what your mind alone can sense. This space has its own subtle, loving energy. where your Being is whole and you are free to be your True Self. It is from this place that we begin our Silence. This silence can be an awareness of being suspended, held, and nurtured in a field of love. It is not in the mind. It is in the heart

.....*Thoughts may come.*

If you find yourself engaged with thoughts, simply release them as soon as you notice, breathe, and return to the heart space, to the awareness of the space of love, to the space of love. In some practices, you may have many thoughts arrive, Our intellect is a gift – and this is a practice. Simply bless and release them as soon as you notice them. The same with emotions or feelings that arise.

Sit

We will sit quietly for 20 minutes,

The leader will ring a chime at the end, and allow everyone to slowly come back to join the group. We will have soft discussion of topics that may have come up for us, always aware of the breath, of speaking from the heart.

Chime

At the end of 20 minutes, a soft chime will ring. Everyone will have a few minutes to slowly adjust from the quiet.



Sacred chanting is universally honored and acknowledged in the great spiritual traditions

*Seek God first.
Allow your attention to be in the core of your physical body, in your heart space, where the breath centers and connects our thoughts, physical sensations, emotions, and awareness and unites us with God*

Guidelines for Sharing after Silence

Emerging from the Silence

As each person emerges from the Silence, the leader quietly explains the next part of the session. We go around the room, one by one. If we choose, we can share a few comments about our experience, or topics that have come up for us. We do not comment on what has been shared, either as the person is sharing, or later, during discussions.

Listening

We simply listen deeply, from the heart, and do not speak. When it is our turn to speak, we try to stay connected to our heart space, and to be conscious of the energy there. We speak “from the heart.”

Sharing

Sharing moves around the room. At the end of sharing, the leader will ask the group whether they would like to discuss one of the topics that came up more deeply, or read from prepared, short readings. Content is prepared ahead of time, and the group may choose to share on the topics that came up, or on the prepared topic. If using the prepared topic

Please keep in mind...

- Participate with utmost clarity, and be mindful of the time
- Listen to others from the heart
- Accept each other completely as we are – non-judgemental
- Seek understanding, not agreement
- Maintain confidentiality and trust
- Speak from your own experience only, your lessons, or your understanding of how God or scripture are working in your life – not about ideas or theology
- Do not comment on what others have shared, give advice, or make suggestions
- Refrain from any interruptions, or from commenting directly to others when they are talking to start a conversation
- Refrain from sharing a second time, until all have had a chance to speak
- It's ok to be silent
- The leader has permission to gently remind the group if the discussion strays from these guidelines

We Love Because He First Loved Us ~1 John 4:19



Salve Regina, Mater misericordie;

Hail to you O Queen, Mother of lovingkindness

Vita dulcedo, et spes nostra salve

Our life, our happiness, our hope

Ad te clamamus, exules filli Evae

Hear us cry out to you, children of Eve in our exile

Ad te suspiramus gementes et flentes

Hear us as we sigh, groaning and weeping

In hac lacrimarum valle

In this life, in this valley of tears

Eia ergo, advocata nostra

Come then, our Advocate turn towards us

Illos, tuos, misericordes oculos, ad nos converte

The gaze of your kind and loving eyes

Et Iesum, benedictum fructum ventris tui

And show us Jesus, the blessed fruit of your womb

Nobis post hoc exsilium ostende

When at last exile here is ended

O Clemens, o pia, o dulcis Virgo Maria

O gentle, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary



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Discussion:

What Do We Learn from “The Power of Silence” by Cardinal Sarah

By going into the desert, Jesus exposed himself to Satan’s seductive power and firmly opposed it, thus prolonging the event of his baptism and his Incarnation. He is not content to descend into the deep waters of the Jordan. Christ descends also to the very depths of human misery, to the regions of broken hearts and ruined relationships, to the most depraved carnal dictatorships and the desolate places of a world marred by sin.

The desert teaches us to fight against evil and all our evil inclinations so as to regain our dignity as children of God. It is impossible to enter into the mystery of God without entering into the solitude and silence of our interior desert.

It is inevitable that the contemplative who has perceived God in this tranquil night of the interior and exterior desert should aspire not only to the most recollected cloisters but to remote, austere hermitages. These are forceful truths that are based on experiences of undeniable validity. But does one absolutely have to live in the desert or in a monastery in order to become a contemplative?

God opens up for everyone, right in the middle of the world and in ordinary life, paths toward a more radical life of contemplation and sanctity. As Father Marie-Eugène wrote in *I Want to See God*:

Creation itself is a silent word of God. The wordless beauty of nature displays before our eyes the manifold riches of a Father who is ceaselessly present among men. This divine speech is not audible to ears that are too human; nevertheless, it is the most profound speech of all. The sun, the moon, and the stars are absolutely silent to our ears, but they are a word and a message essential to our earthly existence. There is a language of the stars that we can neither know nor comprehend but that God understands perfectly.

1. Cardinal Robert Sarah with Nicholas Diat, “The Power of Silence,” San Francisco, CA, Ignatius Press, 2017

When we are lovers, we always notice the slightest gesture of the one whom we love. It is the same with prayer. If we are accustomed to praying often, we can grasp the meaning of God’s silence. There are signs that only two fiancés can understand. The person of prayer is also the only one to grasp the silent signs of affection that God sends him.

~ Cardinal Sarah
The Power of Silence

Discussion:

What Do We Learn from “The Power of Silence” by Cardinal Sarah

God has his mysterious way of being close to us in our trials... External manifestations are not always the best evidence of closeness. Our closest friends are sometimes far from us, which does not prevent them from loving us dearly. A father is not necessarily close to his children throughout their lives, but he remains no less concerned about them.

I often think of my predecessor Archbishop Raymond-Marie Tchidimbo. He remained for almost nine years in a sordid prison, forbidden for him to talk to anyone. In this silence, so terrible in appearance, like an icy and black insult, he had to turn to God in order to survive.

The silence imposed by his jailers became his sole expression of love, his only offering to God, his only ladder to rise to heaven and converse with God, face to face, as a man speaks with his friend. Mysteriously, his dungeon allowed him to understand a little the great silence of heaven.

During the long months, he expected to be savagely murdered, to be electrocuted or beaten. He could understand that the mystery of evil, the mystery of suffering, and the mystery of silence are intimately connected. Thanks to an intimate encounter with God in the silence, he faced the daily trials with serenity. He knew that his life would not end in a miserable jail. He knew that his prison was like a plowed field; every day he sowed his life there as a seed is sown, fully aware that those who sow in tears will sing when they reap. He knew that he was at the door of the true life. Beyond the distress, beyond so many physical and moral humiliations, silence gave him strength, courage, humility, and selflessness.

The silence of eternity is the consequence of God's infinite love. In heaven, we will be with Jesus, totally possessed by God and under the influence of the Holy Spirit. Man will no longer be capable of saying a single word. Prayer itself will have become impossible. It will become contemplation, a look of love and adoration. The Holy Spirit will inflame the souls who go to heaven. They will be completely given over to the spirit.

~ Cardinal Sarah
The Power of Silence

Discussion:

What Do We Learn from “The Power of Silence” by Cardinal Sarah

Benedict XVI, in his homily during the Mass on the Feast of Corpus Christi, June 7, 2012, stated:

To be all together in prolonged silence before the Lord present in his Sacrament is one of the most genuine experiences of our being Church, which is accompanied complementarily by the celebration of the Eucharist, by listening to the word of God, by singing and by approaching the table of the Bread of Life together.

Communion and contemplation cannot be separated, they go hand in hand.

If I am truly to communicate with another person I must know him, I must be able to be in silence close to him, to listen to him and look at him lovingly.

True love and true friendship are always nourished by the reciprocity of looks, of intense, eloquent silences full of respect and veneration, so that the encounter may be lived profoundly and personally rather than superficially.

This is the real anticipation of the silence of God that we are all called to know.

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Silence is the prerequisite for love, and it leads to love. Love is expressed fully only by renouncing speech, noise, excitement, and exaltation. Its highest expression occurs in a death that is silent and totally offered up, for there is no greater proof of love than to give your life for those whom you love [John 15:13]

The love that says nothing and asks for nothing leads to the greatest love, the silent love of God. The silence of love is the perfect silence in the presence of God that sums up all goodness, all beauty, and all perfection....Silent love can only grow in humility.

~Cardinal Sarah

The Power of Silence

1. Cardinal Robert Sarah with Nicholas Diat, “The Power of Silence,” San Francisco, CA, Ignatius Press, 2017

Discussion:

What Do We Learn from “The Power of Silence” by Cardinal Sarah

In heaven, souls are united to the angels and saints through the Spirit. Then, there is no more speech. It is an endless silence, nestled in God’s love.

The liturgy of eternity is silent; souls have nothing else to do but to join the choir of angels. They are exclusively in contemplation.

Here below, to contemplate is already to be in silence. In heaven, this silence becomes a silence of fullness, in the vision of God.

The silence of eternity is a silence of wonder and admiration.

“And after my skin has been thus destroyed, then from my flesh I shall see God, whom I shall see on my side, and my eyes shall behold, and not another” (Job 19:26-27).

Indeed, the silence of eternity is connected to the fullness of God; it is a Trinitarian silence.

The Church knows how difficult it is for man to understand the silence of eternity. Here on earth, there are few things that can make us grasp the immensity of divine love. During the Mass and the Eucharist, the consecration and the elevation are a small anticipation of the eternal silence. If this silence is authentic, we can glimpse the silence of heaven.

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The Power of Silence

20 September 2020

25th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Responsorial Psalm

PS 145:2-3, 8-9, 17-18

R. (18a) The Lord is near to all who call upon Him.

Every day will I bless you, and I will praise your name forever and ever. Great is the LORD and highly to be praised; his greatness is unsearchable.

R. The Lord is near to all who call upon Him.

The LORD is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and of great kindness. The LORD is good to all and compassionate toward all his works.
R. The Lord is near to all who call upon Him.

The LORD is just in all his ways and holy in all his works. The LORD is near to all who call upon him, to all who call upon him in truth.
R. The Lord is near to all who call upon Him

Reading is: 5:6-9

Seek the LORD while he may be found, call Him while he is near. Let the scoundrel forsake his way, and the wicked his thoughts; let him turn to the LORD for mercy; to our God, who is generous in forgiving. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the LORD. As high as the heavens are above the earth, so high are my ways above your ways and my thoughts above your thoughts

Reading ROM 12: 1-2

Brothers and sisters: Christ will be magnified in my body, whether by life or by death. For to me life is Christ, and death is gain. If I go on living in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. And I do not know which I shall choose. I am caught between the two. I long to depart this life and be with Christ, for that is far better. Yet that I remain in the flesh is more necessary for your benefit. Only, conduct yourselves in a way worthy of the gospel of Christ.

Alleluia EPH 1: 17:18

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

Open our hearts, O Lord, to listen to the words of your Son.

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel MT 16:21-27

Jesus told his disciples this parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out at dawn to hire laborers for his vineyard. After agreeing with them for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard. Going out about nine o'clock, the landowner saw others standing idle in the marketplace, and he said to them, 'You too go into my vineyard, and I will give you what is just.' So they went off. And he went out again around noon, and around three o'clock, and did likewise. Going out about five o'clock, the landowner found others standing around, and said to them, 'Why do you stand here idle all day?' They answered, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You too go into my vineyard.' When it was evening the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, 'Summon the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and ending with the first.' When those who had started about five o'clock came, each received the usual daily wage. So when the first came, they thought that they would receive more, but each of them also got the usual wage. And on receiving it they grumbled against the landowner, saying, 'These last ones worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us, who bore the day's burden and the heat.' He said to one of them in reply, 'My friend, I am not cheating you. Did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage? Take what is yours and go. What if I wish to give this last one the same as you? Or am I not free to do as I wish with my own money? Are you envious because I am generous?' Thus, the last will be first, and the first will be last."