



# 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 2”

14 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**





# Magnificat

## Anima Mea Dominum

### My soul doth magnify the Lord



*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*

## Discussion:

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

#### **Cardinal Sarah writes:**

No prophet ever encountered God without withdrawing into solitude and silence. Moses, Elijah, and John the Baptist encountered God in the great silence of the desert. Today, too, monks see God in solitude and silence. I am speaking, not just about a geographical solitude or movement, but about an interior state. It is not enough to be quiet, either. It is necessary to become silence.

For, even before the desert, the solitude, and the silence, God is already in man. The true desert is within us, in our soul. Strengthened with this knowledge, we can understand how silence is indispensable if we are to find God. The Father waits for his children in their own hearts.

*Does hearing this have any impact on how you live your life today? Would you change anything you're doing today, based on this?*

#### **Saint Bruno writes:**

What benefits and divine exaltation the silence and the solitude of the desert hold in store for those who love it, only those who have experienced it can know...Here also God crowns his athletes with the hoped-for reward: a peace unknown to the world and joy in the Holy Spirit...this is the best part chosen by Mary, never to be taken away from her...I could only wish, that you too, brother, had such...divine love....If only a love like this could take possession of you! Immediately all the glory in the world would seem like so much dirt to you.”

*Have you ever taken a retreat to a geographic desert area? Does it seem possible to “go to the desert” in your own life, where you are? Why, or why not?*

It is necessary to leave our inner turmoil to find God. Despite the agitations, the busyness, the easy pleasures, God remains silently present.

~ Cardinal Sarah  
The Power of Silence

In speaking to Martha, Jesus says: “Mary has chosen the good portion (Luke 10:42). He reminds her of the importance of “calming and quieting the soul” (Psalms 131:2) so as to listen to one’s heart. Christ tenderly invites her to stop so as to return to her heart, the place of true welcome, and the dwelling place of God’s silent tenderness.

~ Cardinal Sarah  
The Power of Silence

Discussion:

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

### Cardinal Sarah writes:

In every day it is important to be silent so as to determine the outlines of one’s future action. The contemplative life is not the only state in which many must make the effort to leave his heart in silence...In everyday life, whether secular, civil, or religious, exterior silence is [also] necessary

### He shares from Thomas Merton:

What to do? Those who love God should attempt to preserve or create an atmosphere in which He can be found. Christians should have quiet homes. Throw out televisions if necessary – let those who can stand a little silence find other people who like silence, and create silence and peace for one another. ...Provide people with places they can go to be quiet..relax minds and hearts in the presence of God.

Jesus repeatedly tells us: “If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the Truth, and the Truth will make you free” (Jn 8:31-32)

### Cardinal Sarah writes:

The more man advances in the mystery of God, the more he loses speech. Man is enveloped in a power of love, and he becomes mute from astonishment and wonder. Before God, we disappear, snapped up by the greatest silence.

### St Therese of Lisieux wrote in her journal:

I often hide myself in a corner of my room where I can shut myself in the bed curtains and then I think...I think about the good God, the shortness of life, about eternity: in a word, I think.”...Now I know that I was really praying, while my Divine Master instructed me.”

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

*Ours is a time of continual movement which often leads to restlessness, with the risk of “doing for the sake of doing” We must resist this temptation by trying to “be” before trying “to do.”*

~ Saint Pope John Paul II  
Novo Millennio Ineunte

*...“Silence is not a virtue, noise not a sin....But the turmoil and confusion and constant noise of modern society are the expression of ambiance of its greatest sins. — A world of propaganda, of endless argument, vituperation, criticism, or simply of chatter, is a world without anything to live for*

~ Thomas Merton  
The Sign of Jonas



## Discussion:

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

#### Cardinal Sarah writes<sup>1</sup>:

The wisdom of God has generated in every person a great love that nourishes the little silence of the human heart...Nothing in this world is more important than the silence of God. No human noises, even the very sweet sound of the Gospel, can express the magnificent silence of God.

Face to face with God’s silence, we are confronted with absolute love. And this great silence also explains the freedom left to man. God’s only power is to love silently. He is incapable of any oppressive force. God is love, and love cannot compel, force, or oppress in order to be loved in return.

#### Isaac the Syrian wrote<sup>1</sup>:

After a time, a certain sweetness is born in the heart from the practice of this labor [the ascetism of silence], and it leads the body by force to persevere in stillness. A multitude of tears is born to us in this discipline through a wonderful divine vision of something that the heart distinctly perceives, sometimes with pain, sometimes with amazement. For the heart humbles itself and becomes like a tiny babe, and as soon as she begins to pray, tears flow forth in advance of her prayer

#### From the Proverbs:

- “When words are many, transgression is not lacking” [10:19]
- “He who guards his mouth preserves his life; he who opens wide his lips comes to ruin” [Prov 13:3]
- “Whoever uses too many words will be loathed.” [Sirach 20:8]
- “I tell you, on the day of judgement, men will render account for every careless word they utter [MT 12:36]
- “Make balances and scales for your words, and make a door and a bolt with your mouth. Beware lest you err with your tongue, lest you fall before him who lies in wait.” [Sirach 28;25-26]

*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

**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."