



Leaning Into the Heart of the Holy

2016 Lenten Devotions

Friday

February 12, 2016

“Silence is the first language of God; all else is a poor translation.”

–Thomas Merton

"The first service that one owes to others in the fellowship consists in listening to them. Just as love to God begins with listening to His Word, so the beginning of love for the brethren is learning to listen to them. It is God's love for us that He not only gives us His Word but also lends us His ear.

So it is His work that we do for our brother when we learn to listen to him. Christians so often think they must always contribute something when they are in the company of others, that this is the one service they have to render. They forget that listening can be a greater service than speaking.

Many people are looking for an ear that will listen. They do not find it among Christians, because these Christians are talking where they should be listening. But he who can no longer listen to his brother will soon be no longer listening to God either; he will be doing nothing but prattle in the presence of God too.

This is the beginning of the death of the spiritual life, and in the end there is nothing left but spiritual chatter and condescension arrayed in pious words. One who cannot listen long and patiently will presently be talking beside the point and be never really speaking to others, albeit he be not conscious of it. Anyone who thinks that his time is too valuable to spend keeping quiet will eventually have no time for God and his brother, but only for himself and for his own follies."

–Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Prayer:

Teach me to listen, O God, to those nearest me, my family, my friends, my co-workers. Help me to be aware that no matter what words I hear, the message is, “Accept the person I am. Listen to me.” Teach me to listen, my caring God, to those far from me—the whisper of the hopeless, the plea of the forgotten, the cry of the anguished. Teach me to listen, O God, to myself. Help me to be less afraid to trust the voice inside—in the deepest part of me. Teach me to listen, Holy Spirit, for your voice—in busyness and in boredom, in certainty and doubt, in noise and in silence. Teach me, Lord, to listen. Amen. –John Veltri, S.J.

Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16

You who live in the shelter of the Most High,
who abide in the shadow of the Almighty,
will say to the Lord, “My refuge and my fortress;
my God, in whom I trust.”

Because you have made the Lord your refuge,
the Most High your dwelling-place,
no evil shall befall you,
no scourge come near your tent.

For he will command his angels concerning you
to guard you in all your ways.
On their hands they will bear you up,
so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.
You will tread on the lion and the adder,
the young lion and the serpent you will trample under foot.

Those who love me, I will deliver;
I will protect those who know my name.
When they call to me, I will answer them;
I will be with them in trouble,
I will rescue them and honor them.
With long life I will satisfy them,
and show them my salvation.