

Father's Notes

March 30, 2025

Did you know that the Mass is built to foster silence? In our noisy and hectic lives, we are drenched with sound. While our liturgical celebrations can seem just as loud, in truth the Mass is meant to be a celebration of silence. St. John of the Cross said that silence is God's language of love. Silence therefore, is our personal opportunity to encounter our Maker.

How is this experienced during Mass? The big book we use is called the Roman Missal, at several points it instructs the priest to pause. We see this in the opening prayer, as he says "Let us Pray." There is silence between the 1st reading, the psalms, the epistle from St. Paul and the Gospel. And of course, there are many moments of silence within the Liturgy of the Eucharist. My favorite is when I kneel after raising the host and chalice, it gives me a moment to acknowledge that Jesus is before me. I could continue, but the point is silence is needed to express what we cannot say verbally. The silence prescribed throughout Mass gives us an opportunity to be joined heart-to-heart with our Lord.

The silence at Mass also encourages us to apply it in our lives, which is why I invite you to consider building some silence into your daily routine during this Lenten season. Where can you take 10-15 minutes of silence in front of a crucifix or image of Jesus? Is there a special spot you can designate as a quiet space? As another practice, how about fasting from using your phone for an hour?

There are many ways to practice silence, I hope we can enter the silence in Mass and build its presence in our lives. I will close with a quote from Pope St. John Paul II: "In this oasis of quiet, before the wonderful spectacle of nature, one easily experiences how profitable silence is, a good that today is ever more rare... In reality, only in silence does man succeed in hearing in the depth of his conscience the voice of God, which really makes him free."

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