

Making Silence

Silence, in my past thinking, has always been something that happens, not something to be made.

A new awareness happened upon reading the chapter, “Silence” in Kathleen Norris’ book *Amazing Grace*. Evidently a very creative teacher, Kathleen recounts her experience in a third grade classroom teaching her students the experience of making noise and making silence. The children’s written images of the experience of making silence are causes for meditation.

This reading affected my own coming to prayer in a new way; being in silence seemed a separation, myself and silence; making silence was a participative event involving my whole self. One child’s image “Silence is a tree spreading its branches to the sun,” brought me to quiet reflection on the bare branch, frost covered tree outside my window. In the cold and stillness of winter, the tree stands motionless and in that silence builds the strength and the resources that will allow the noise and the motion of new life to spring forth in the arrival of warm and breezy days.



Daily life is filled with noise, noise of various sources and decibels. This noise can be energizing as well as debilitating. Coming to mind as an example of the energy of noise was the enthusiastic din of millions of people gathered in the mall in Washington, D.C. for the [Inauguration](#) of the U.S.A.’s 44th president. This noise brought the crowd energy and hope, the power of a group united.

With this picture in mind, I imagined the same crowd of millions making silence.

Can you feel what a wave of power such a massive crowd could bring with united silence! In the cold challenge of the world situation today, these expectant spirits wait to unite, ready for the new growth toward justice and peace, our hope for the future. With all working, each taking a part in making silence, we can prepare to make a positive noise that will indeed change our lives, our nation, and our world.

Today we need this art of making silence individually and in union with others. Quiet times that foster the strength and courage for the action needed in our distracted world. Let each of us begin the monumental task of bringing peace and justice to our world. The Chinese philosopher, [Lao Tse](#), reminds us that peace begins in the heart.



**If there is to be peace in the world,
There must be peace in the nations.
If there is to be peace in the nations,
There must be peace in the cities.
If there is to be peace in the cities,
There must be peace between neighbors.
If there is to be peace between neighbors,
There must be peace in the home.
If there is to be peace in the home,
There must be peace in the heart.**

Lao Tse (Chinese philosopher, 6th Century BCE)

Let us begin making silence today so that peace may come to our hearts and begin this movement toward peace in our world.