

FUTURE CHURCH



A WAY OF LIFE FOR THE
CHURCH OF THE FUTURE

A Community of Peace in a Culture of Fear

Luke 5:15:-16, Isaiah 26:3

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A community of peace in a culture of fear (through the practice of silence and solitude).

Luke 5:15-16

Yet the news about him spread all the more, so that crowds of people came to hear him and to be healed of their sicknesses. But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.

Isaiah 26:3 (ESV)

You keep him in perfect peace
whose mind is stayed on you,
because he trusts in you.

“Everywhere I looked there were words trying to take my eyes from the road. They said, ‘Use me, take me, buy me, drink me, smell me, touch me, kiss me, sleep with me.’”

- Henri Nouwen, *The Way of the Heart*

We live our lives under the dictatorship of noise.

“Modern society can no longer do without the dictatorship of noise. It lulls us in an illusion of cheap democracy, while snatching our freedom away with subtle violence of the devil, that father of lies...Without noise, a postmodern man falls into a dull, insistent uneasiness. He is accustomed to permanent background noise, which sickens yet reassures him. Without noise, man is feverish, lost. Noise gives him security, like a drug on which he has become dependent. With its festive appearance, noise is a whirlwind that avoids facing itself. Agitation becomes a tranquilizer, a sedative, a morphine pump...But noise is a dangerous, deceptive medicine, a diabolical lie that helps man avoid confronting himself in his interior emptiness. The awakening will necessarily be brutal.”

- Robert Cardinal Sarah, *The Power of Silence*

We have surface fears and deep fears.

“Silence is frightening because it strips us as nothing else does, throwing us upon the stark realities of our life. It reminds us of death, which will cut us off from this world and leave only us and God. And in that quiet, what if there turns out to be very little to ‘just us and God?’ Think what it says about the inward emptiness of our lives if we must always turn on the tape player or radio to make sure something is happening around us.”

- Dallas Willard, *Spirit of the Disciplines*

Our surface fears and the noise in our world that hold us there are a kind of deception that keep us from accessing our deeper fear; and therefore keep us from confronting our false self, and thus being truly free to live in God's love and presence.

Luke 5:15-16

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The lonely place is a place of subtraction; not addition.

Translations of Luke 5:

- NLT: "But Jesus often withdrew to the wilderness for prayer."
- NCV: "Jesus often slipped away to be alone so he could pray."
- The Message: "As often as possible Jesus withdrew to out-of-the-way places for prayer."

Silence is being with God, and God alone.

Contemplative Spirituality

Silence and solitude (traditionally called "Contemplative Spirituality") is the inner work of creating the emotional and spiritual space, which allows Christ to build in you an inner sanctuary where you can commune with God, unite with God's will, and enjoy His presence.

"The mystics all agree that silence is the royal road to spiritual formation. I have never met anyone seriously interested in the spiritual life who did not have a growing desire for silence...As long as our hearts and minds are filled with words of our own making, there is no space for the Word to enter deeply into our hearts and bear fruit. In and through silence the

Word of God descends from the mind into the heart, where we can ruminate on it, [chew] it, digest it, and let it become flesh and blood in us. This is the meaning of meditation. Without silence the Word cannot become our inner guide; without meditation it cannot build its home in our hearts and speak from there.”

- Henri Nouwen, *Spiritual Formation*

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John 15:4 (The Message)

“Live in me. Make your home in me just as I do in you.”

“Emotional wounds of a lifetime that I stored in my body and psyche began to heal. My over-attachment to power and control, affection and esteem, and security and survival begin to loosen. My false self came into view. As I learned to self-observe, I was empowered to self correct. The consequence is being able to live more often from my true self.”

- Phileena Heuertz, *Mindful Silence*

1. Dedicate regular time for Silence & Solitude
2. Breathe & Relax
3. Be with God & God alone