

Friends of Silence

Vol. XXXIII, No. 3

+ + + + +

March, 2020

“Is there enough Silence for the Word to be heard?”

Dear Friends,

The year after my first child was born could have been called *A Crash Course in the Contemplative Life*. Overnight my daily landscape shifted from the external and the social, to the internal and the domestic. My driving need for productivity and efficiency made no sense in a newborn’s



Detail from a Wall Hanging
Hand-painted in Nepal

routine. I faced rhythmic but unscheduled days with swaths of quiet time. A part of me panicked without the markers of purpose and meaning I had always used to define myself, but the new pulse of our home and the simple yet powerful needs of my baby created a steady familiarity with silence.

Home, at its very best, is a space of welcome and acceptance. Maya Angelou once wrote, “*The ache for home lives in all of us. The safe place where we can go as we are and not be questioned*”. For some of us, this is an actual place: a

house or a landscape. Other times *home* can be the people and communities that provide the sort of reflection— knowing and being known— that draws us further into ourselves in order that the whole world around us can become a place where we truly live.

~Joy



God who loves us knows us. We long to be known, not only from the outside but from within. We feel that if others knew us as we really are, with our hopes, dreams and struggles to be whole, they would have a compassionate and tolerant love for us. Conversely, were we to live for an hour within the mind of another, even that of a social outcast, we would come away humbled and more understanding. We cannot know people from within, only from without and with difficulty despite our love. Not so with God. The Spirit of God has been poured out on us. God has made a home in us.

~ by Sean Caulfield in *THE GOD OF ORDINARY PEOPLE*

What we speak becomes the house we live in.

~ Hafiz, translated by Daniel Ladinsky



“Piercing the Veil” by Sally Veach, Mixed Media on Canvas, 48”x36”, showing at the Museum of the Shenandoah Valley.

This is the bright home
In which I live,
This is where
I ask
My friends
To come,
This is where I want to love all the things
It has taken me so long
To learn to love.

~ by David Whyte from “*The House of Belonging*”

What if becoming who and what we truly are happens not through striving and trying but by recognizing and receiving the people and places and practices that offer us the warmth of encouragement when we need to unfold?

How would this shape the choices you make about how to spend today?

~ Oriah Mountain Dreamer from *Prelude to "The Dance"*

I love you, gentlest of Ways...

You, the great homesickness we could never shake off,
you, the forest that always surrounded us...

~ by Rainer Maria Rilke from "*Ich Liebe dich, du sanftestes Gesetz*,"
translated by Anita Barrows and Joanna Macy

Once we begin to see our lives within our own families as opportunities for spiritual development, the possibility of inner growth is unlimited. Home is no longer just a place to eat and sleep, but a school for our souls and spirits. Each day yields its lesson, and our children and partners become our teachers. We find our rhythm and learn to harmonize. We learn how to cherish and care for one another and how to care for our own souls as well. We learn to dance together, how to lead and when to follow. In so doing, we bring about changes both large and small, for our children, nurtured by rhythm, may ultimately heal and restore the rhythm of the world.

~ by Katrina Kenison in *MITTEN STRINGS FOR GOD*

Because this bird is singing to me,

I belong to the wide wind,
The people far away who share
The air and the clouds.
Together we are looking up
Into all we do not own
And we are listening.

~ by Naomi Shihab Nye from
"Messages from Everywhere"

Let go into the clear light, trust it, merge with it,
and enter the Silence, your true home.

The more light you allow within you,
the brighter the world you live in will be.

~ Shakti Gawain



Joy Houck Bauer © 2015

The stars up in the bright sky

When it's nighttime.

The people eating inside.

The animals eating outside.

Amen. ~ *The prayer of a 3-year-old*

And one day, when I need
to tell myself something intelligent
about love,

I'll close my eyes
and recall this room and everything in it...

~ by Li-Young Lee from "*This Room and Everything in It*"

...the house of my soul is narrow; enlarge it that thou
mayest enter in.

~ St. Augustine

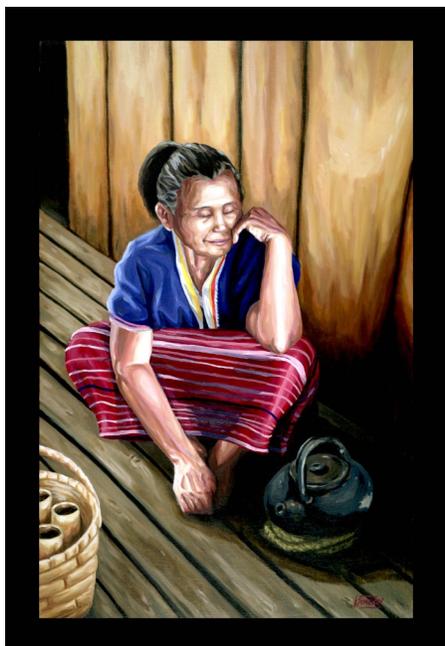
When someone deeply listens to you
it is like holding out a dented cup
you've had since childhood
and watching it fill up with
cold, fresh water.

When it balances on top of the brim,
you are understood.

When it overflows and touches your skin,
You are loved...

When someone deeply listens to you,
your bare feet are on the earth
and a beloved land that seemed distant
is now at home within you.

~ by John Fox in *FINDING WHAT YOU DIDN'T LOSE*



"Ekkar: Karen hospitality" by Keith Jones Pomeroy © 2009