

Ears to Hear: Handout 3, Meditation on Listening

The Telephone –by Michel Quoist (*Prayers of Life* Gill and Macmillan 1963, p.15)

I have just hung up; why did he telephone?

I don't know... Oh! I get it...

I talked a lot and listened very little.

forgive me, Lord, it was a monologue and not a dialogue.

I explained my idea and did not get his;

Since I didn't listen, I learned nothing,

Since I didn't listen, I didn't help,

Since I didn't listen, we didn't communicate.

Forgive me, Lord, for we were connected,

and now we are cut off.

Silent reflection

Invite people to reflect in silence for a minute on Fr Quoist's meditation.

Then invite people to become aware of their breathing, the sound of breathing in and breathing out, ... breathing in and breathing out, ... breathing in and breathing out, ... breathing in and breathing out, ... breathing in and breathing out, ... breathing in and breathing out, ...

Then invite them, as they continue to breathe slowly, rhythmically, to be aware of the sounds in the room, or outside. What do they hear? Which do they want to pay attention to? Which ones make them want to pray for the source of the sound?

Scripture Verses

You must understand this, my beloved:

let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger;

for your anger does not produce God's righteousness. (James 1:19-20)

Pause

He is our God,

and we are the people of his pasture,

and the sheep of his hand.

O that today you would listen to his voice! (Psalm 95: 7)

Pause

You search out my path and my lying down,

and are acquainted with all my ways.

Even before a word is on my tongue,

O Lord, you know it completely. (Psalm 139: 3)

Pause

While Peter was speaking, a cloud came and overshadowed them;

and they were terrified as they entered the cloud.

Then from the cloud came a voice that said,

"This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!" (Luke 9:34-35)

Pause

Let anyone with ears listen! (Matt 13:9)

Pause

Final Prayer

Loving and listening Lord,
you have given us two ears and one mouth:
help us to listen twice as much as we speak.

Help us by your Spirit
to be attentive to others
as you are attentive to us.

In his earthly ministry, your Son often saw behind a question
to the heart of a person, to their meaning, to their need.

Teach us who follow him to listen to what is not being said,
to hear the things that are hard to put into words,
to pay attention to the whole person in front of us.

And Lord, do not forget to listen to us,
to forgive us when our words go wrong,
to heal us where the words of others wound us,
to make us wise by your true Word Jesus,
and to draw us into that love beyond all words,
which is your eternal life. Amen.