

THE HUMILITY OF SILENCE by JEANNIE EWING

I have never been a quiet person. From the moment of my birth, my parents describe me as having “a good set of lungs.” It’s been a long-standing joke in my family of origin that I have, at times, been bossy and opinionated, but always loud. My voice carries well.

As a writer, I have tried to transfer my speaking voice onto paper. The written word can be either more or less neutral than the speaking voice, depending on interpretation of the audience. But with my background in psychology, I know that tonal inflection and body language really make the message; these account for at least 85% of total communication.

Moving into a place of silence does not happen often in my life. Though the severe introvert in me aches for order and serenity, I do not often have large chunks of time to devote to thought or prayer. Raising a brood of five boisterous children of varying ages and developmental stages, including special needs, means I have come to disciplining myself more and more in my use of language.

Words are often used for defense. We may overshare or overexplain, because we carry a desperate and inherent need to protect ourselves from being misunderstood or rejected. Sometimes loquaciousness is a signal of anxiety: we speak, because we’re nervous or trying to distract ourselves from the fear swelling inside.

There is, or can be, humility in silence, however. This is not always the case, as in the person who uses silence as a weapon to avoid conflict or ignore facing what’s painful or difficult. When silence is a form of custody of the tongue, it is a profound humiliation.

Think of a time in your life when you wanted to defend yourself, but couldn’t. Or when you were so angry you wanted to justify your reactions. Or when you’ve had an incredibly stressful day and just need to vent in a stream of consciousness.

I have been in each of these situations, and more often than not, I am not conscientious about what I say. I do not think carefully before speaking, pausing first to reflect and then pray for guidance from the Holy Spirit. Instead, I just let it all flow freely to whomever is close by, usually my husband, and the damage can be deep and lasting.

Words can either harm or heal. The power of silence is that it carries far more weight than constant chatter. We all know someone who seldom speaks, but when she does, every word is carefully selected and reflects much wisdom (Think: Mother Teresa of Calcutta.). St. Joseph is a popular example of a saint who spoke not one word in Scripture, yet whose life mirrored exemplary virtue.

It is in imitating the saints who intentionally refrained from speaking when they wanted to, or who spoke up when they would rather have remained silent, that demonstrates to the rest of us how and when to use our words.

Sometimes it is helpful to turn to the Word Himself. I frequently think about how God the Father breathed His Word, and the Word became flesh and dwelt among us. That is power. That is the gift we, too, are granted, but we must use it cautiously and wisely rather than out of impulsivity or volatility.

The reason silence can be so humbling to many of us is that there are occasions when God might want us to listen rather than deliberate. He may want us to allow the other person to believe they are right, when, in fact, we may have more information on the subject at hand or even be an expert in the field.

The purpose of silence is so that we might first ponder, then discern what we are called to do: speak or listen? More often than not, the answer is to listen first. Silence carries immense power, because it is from the quiet that the best and clearest messages are formed and delivered. When we quiet our minds and hearts and ask ourselves, what is the best response? God will grant us clarity in that moment.

And if we are meant to speak, we speak first from charity, from kindness. If we are meant to listen, we do so with fully receptive hearts. Silence gives birth to humility, because our human nature is somehow tamed and tempered to first receive, then to give.



ST. MONICA PARISH
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PASTOR: **Rev. Mark Bautista**
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PARISH OFFICE HOURS
Monday – Friday
9:30 am – 1 pm / 1:30 pm – 4:30 pm

MASS SCHEDULES
WEEKDAYS: **9:00 am**
SATURDAYS: **9:00 am & 5:00 pm**
SUNDAYS: **9:00 am, 11:00 am**
& 4:00 pm (YVR)

CONFESSION SCHEDULES
SATURDAYS: **9:45 am—0:30 am**
20 minutes before Daily Mass

BAPTISM every Saturday @ 11am
WEDDING – Please call the Parish Office
at least 6 months in advance.
FUNERAL, HOUSE BLESSING, SICK CALL
Please call the Parish Office.

WEDNESDAY:
Perpetual Help Novena after 9am Mass
FRIDAY:
Holy Hour after 9am Mass
1st SATURDAY:
Rosary for Vocation after 9am Mass

Fifth Sunday of Easter
Weekend of April 27/28, 2024

1st Reading—Acts 9.26-31
Responsorial Psalm—22
2nd Reading—1 John 3.18-24
Gospel—John 15.1-8

Jesus offers a quintessential stewardship statement in today’s Gospel reading: “Whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit, because without me you can do nothing.” Jesus Christ offers us the fullness of eternal life. Do our lives reveal that this is what we want? Do we believe that by hearing the Word of the Lord and responding we not only produce “good fruit,” but abide in the very life of God?



Project Advance 2024: Building our Parish Community

Your support of Project Advance will help grow our parish and expand the reach of Christ's love to those who need it most. Parish Projects for 2024: (1) Installation of acoustic panels in the church, (2) Installation of laser projectors in the parish hall, (3) repair of the hall roof.

Tax-deductible donations can be made in person at the parish or online.

St Monica Parish goal is \$75,000.00. Learn more and donate at projectadvance.ca.

Apply for Scholarship: Lay Ministry Formation

The Formation for Lay Ministry Scholarship supports the ongoing formation of people serving in a variety of parish and non-parish ministries within the Archdiocese of Vancouver. The scholarship will cover the full tuition for up to three foundational graduate-level courses at St. Mark's College in Vancouver. **Application deadline: Tuesday, April 30.** Learn more and apply at rcav.org/scholarship.

Pro-Life Mass and Prayer Vigil

One of the fundamental answers to abortion is prayer. Join your voice with ours as we pray on the first Saturday of each month for a new culture of life. Hosted by the Archdiocese of Vancouver, we will begin with Mass, followed by the rosary and other prayers either at a church with Adoration or at a local hospital.

All are welcome! The next Mass and vigil takes place on May 4 at 8:30 a.m. at St. Mary's Parish in Vancouver. Learn more at beholdvancouver.org/events.

Save the Date: Archdiocesan Mass for Civilly Married Couples

Are you married outside the Catholic Church? Would you like to regularize your union so you can receive the sacraments once again? Now, you have a great opportunity as Archbishop Miller celebrates the Mass Wedding for civilly married couples.

It will be a beautiful community celebration that will cost very little for the individual couples! For more information, please contact Deacon Raul Abella at rabella@rcav.org or 778-512-9163.

Registration Deadline: Sunday, July 21

Save the Date: Saturday, September 21, 1:30 p.m. at St. Paul's Parish in Richmond

Prayer to St. Michael the Archangel

St. Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle. Be our defense against the wickedness and snares of the Devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray, and do thou, O Prince of the heavenly hosts, by the power of God, thrust into hell Satan, and all the evil spirits, who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.

O glorious prince St. Michael, chief and commander of the heavenly hosts, guardian of souls, vanquisher of rebel spirits, servant in the house of the Divine King and our admirable conductor, you who shine with excellence and superhuman virtue deliver us from all evil, who turn to you with confidence and enable us by your gracious protection to serve God more and more faithfully every day.

ORGANIZATION MEETINGS

Legion of Mary every Tuesday @ 9:30am in the Crying Room

Legion of Mary Junior every Sunday @ 10am in the East Room

Cenacle Prayer Group every Thursday @ 9:30am in the Crying Room

Couples for Christ Ministries (CFC) every 1st & 3rd Saturday @ 12pm in the Upper Room

Catholic Women's League (CWL) every 2nd Saturday @ 10am in the South Room

El Shaddai Ministries every 2nd & 4th Saturday @ 6pm in the Upper Room

Knights of Columbus (KoC) every 3rd & 4th Saturday @ 10am in the Upper Room

Bukas Loob sa Diyos Community (BLD) every 3rd Sunday @ 2pm in the Upper Room

Families for Christ Community (FFCC) once a month @ 2pm in the Hall

(Please contact FFCC @ 778 872 4100 for exact dates)

Zumba & Line Dancing work-out every Monday @ 7pm in the Hall.

Fees: \$30/month or \$10 drop-in.

9th Annual Gala Redemptoris Mater Seminary of Vancouver

Join us for a wonderful evening in the company of seminarians and friends! The gala will help raise funds necessary to continue the mission of the Redemptoris Mater Seminary in Vancouver. On Friday, May 10, 6:00 p.m. at the Italian Cultural Centre in Vancouver. Cost is \$130. Included in the ticket is your entry, door prize, access to the silent auction, and a buffet dinner. Learn more and buy tickets via rmsvancouver.ca/events.

Living Laudato Si': The Challenge and the Promise

Laudato Si', Pope Francis' 2015 encyclical on care for creation, is a clarion call to listen to the cries of the earth and of the poor and to assuage their suffering. This second annual *Laudato Si'* lecture will reflect on the challenges and promises of devoting ourselves to this undertaking. In these turbulent times, how can we navigate the obstacles and fulfill the promises that caring for creation in the spirit of *Laudato Si'* places before us? On Friday, May 17, 7:00 p.m. at St. Mark's College in Vancouver. Free admission. All are welcome! Learn more and register at beholdvancouver.org/events.

Prayer to the Holy Spirit

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of Thy faithful and enkindle in them the fire of Thy love. Send forth Thy Spirit and they shall be created. And Thou shalt renew the face of the earth. *Let us pray. O God, Who didst instruct the hearts of the faithful by the light of the Holy Spirit, grant us in the same Spirit to be truly wise, and ever to rejoice in His consolation. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.*