# **Spirituality of Synodality**

Synodality and Silent Suffering

Fr. Donald Chambers

### **Opening Prayer**

Come, Holy Spirit! You inspire new tongues and place words of life on our lips: keep us from becoming a "museum Church", beautiful but mute, with much past and little future. Come among us, so that in this synodal experience we will not lose our enthusiasm, dilute the power of prophecy, or descend into useless and unproductive discussions.

Come, Spirit of love, open our hearts to hear your voice! Come, Holy Spirit of holiness, renew the holy and faithful People of God! Come, Creator Spirit, renew the face of the earth!

#### **Amen**



### **Class Objectives**

- 1. To reflect on silence as a pathway to listening deeply to the voices of suffering.
- 2. To become more conscious of the cry of "homeless" brothers and sisters



# SUMMARY Silent Listening



**PARTICIPANTS: LISTEN DEEPLY TO EACH PERSON AND ATTEND** TO HOW THE HOLY **SPIRIT IS MOVING:** (1)WITHIN ONESELF (2) WITHIN THE **PERSON SPEAKING** (3) IN THE GROUP

# HOW: Leave a gap where the Spirit enters and surprises us









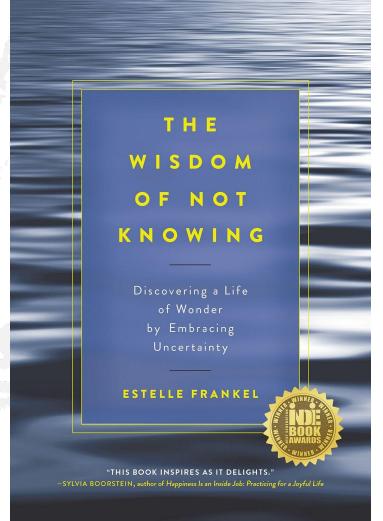
"Pope Francis is showing us the way when in each synod he insists on stopping after every four interventions and leaving a time of silence. It is a way of saying: this whole project of Church is not about us and our opinions; it is the Spirit of God who is the real mover. Personally I think this is why Pope Francis can be unperturbed by the politics and the arguments. He knows that we have to go below those levels, those categories of right and left, conservative and liberal. We have to go deeper, below ideologies, to where the Spirit is at work. And we have to let that Spirit do the work" (Fr. Auturo Sosa, Jesuit Superior)

# Understanding the Gap

Jewish Mysticism throws some light on the significance of these in-between spaces/gaps in the understanding of the mystery of the White Fire of Torah...

(The Wisdom of Not Knowing, Estelle Frankel)





# Jewish mystics refer to the in-between spaces as "white fire of Torah."

The "white fire of Torah or white space" is a direct contrast to the "black fire of Torah." While the "white fire" is the "wordless and silence existing in a timeless realm," the "black fire" comprises of the written words, stories, and commandments.



The white fire is the gap (in between space, nothingness, void, formlessness, mystery) with which God's voice resides. We have to go there, place ourselves in that disposition/attitude to be able to hear. (JOSEPH, JESUS, JOHN OF THE CROSS)



# How do we enter the gap inbetween space? AWARENESS

Silence is the awareness of being in the present; to be aware of what's happening within me and around me. There are two dimensions of silence.



# THE FIRST DIMENSION IS INTERNAL

## SILENCE IS A SPIRITUAL GIFT

". . . in silence we hear our own cries of fear and pain and resistance . . .

In silence we come to know ourselves."



# THE SECOND DIMENSION OF SOCIAL OR **EXTERNAL**

IT'S THE LIFE-GIVING PART OF HUMAN COMMUNITY



Silent Listening or Listening of the Heart

## THOUGHTS TO PONDER

Silence is good when it is teaching me about me and urging me on to become even more of the best of myself. Silence is good when I am listening to the other intently . . . Silence is good when I refuse to sin with my tongue. Silence is always good when it is the monk's cell to which I go (Secret/incognito/hidden life) to hear the voice in me that is divine . . .



## AIDS TO SILENT LISTENING

- Adoration
- Lectio Divina
- Visio-Divina
- Mindful Meditation
- Christian Meditation
- Moments of Silence in the Eucharist
- Silence and Meetings
- Contemplation and Family Life



#### **Breakout Rooms**

Based on the insights of last week's class, what resonated with you? How did you chew on it during the course of the past week?

As each person share, listen without questioning or commenting. Allow yourself to be a "white space" or gap allowing the words of the person to become manifest in the space. Be aware of your feelings as the sharing progresses.







As you view this painting, what is resonating within you and how are you feeling?

# Silent Listening & Suffering

### The Synod Journey: Silence and Suffering

- "Dialogue is a path of perseverance that also includes silences and sufferings, but which is capable of gathering the experience of persons and peoples" (Handbook).
- "We are continually challenged "as the People of God to take on the pain of our brothers and sisters wounded in their flesh and in their flesh". For too long the cry of the victims has been a cry that the Church has not been able to hear sufficiently. These are deep wounds that are difficult to heal, for which forgiveness can never be asked for enough and which constitute obstacles. . . to advancing in the direction of "journeying together" (PD, 6).
- "It is precisely in the furrows dug by the sufferings of every kind endured by the human family and by the People of God those new languages of faith and new haths are flourishing" (PD 7).

PD - Preparatory Document

### Silent Listening and Suffering

- "Living a participative and inclusive ecclesial process that offers everyone - especially those who for various reasons find themselves on the margins - the opportunity to express themselves and to be heard...." (PD,2)
- The perspective of 'journeying together', then, is even broader, and embraces all humankind, whose 'joys and hopes, griefs and anxieties' we share (GS #1) -PD, 15)



### Genesis 4:10

And the LORD said,
"What have you done?
The voice of your brother's blood
is crying to me from the ground.



### FIGURATIVELY SPEAKING

When blood is forced from its home it cries out to return home - it's HOMELESS.

HOMELESSNESS: Regulated to the periphery and cries out to return.





"In your local Church . . . What are the road companions, including those outside the ecclesial perimeter? What persons or group are left on the margins, expressly or in fact?

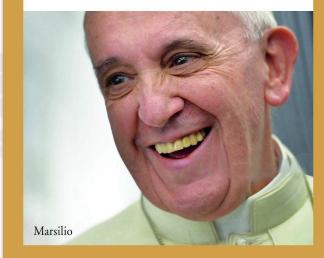


# "Your brother's (sister's) blood"



"Let us dream, then, as a single human family, as fellow travelers sharing the same flesh, as children of the same earth which is our common home, each of us bringing the richness of his or her beliefs and convictions, each of us with his or her own voice, brothers and sisters all." (Fratelli Tutti, #8)







"It is my desire that, in this our time, by acknowledging the dignity of each human person, we can contribute to the rebirth of a universal aspiration to fraternity. Fraternity between all men and women..." (Fratelli Tutti, 8)







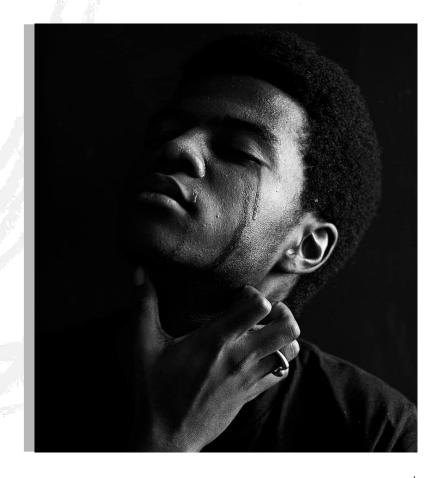
## PAUSE FOR SILENT LISTENING

WHO ARE THE PERSONS LIVING ON THE MARGINS OF YOUR PARISH, SOCIETY, FAMILIES, RELIGIOUS **COMMUNITY?** 



### "Crying out"

What triggers our crying out? Feeling discomfort and distress due to the OUR physical or psychological homelessness. Crying signifies a desire to return home.





### "Crying out"

- We are treated unjustly by our community or family or social group
- 2. Physically wounded
- 3. Indiscriminately excluded from a group or relations
- 4. Physically, emotionally or verbally abused
- 5. Whenever we need attention.





# LISTEN



Listening requires pausing from our social, religious, and psychological preoccupations in order to be able to pay attention to the now; to this moment; to the present, to this person.





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"Only in listening to ourselves (our motives, struggles, fears) can we reach out and listen to others without judgement, but compassion and care" Padical Spirit

12 WAYS TO LIVE A FREE

AND AUTHENTIC LIFE

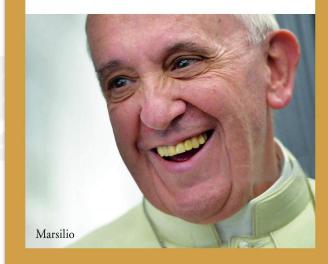
Joan Chittister

AUTHOR OF BETWEEN THE DARK AND THE DAYLIGHT

"Let us seek out others and embrace the world as it is, without fear of pain or a sense of inadequacy, because there we will discover all the goodness that God has planted in human hearts. Difficulties that seem overwhelming are opportunities for growth, not excuses for a glum resignation that can lead only to acquiescence." (Fratelli Tutti, 78)



INTRODUZIONE DI ANTONIO SPADARO





## PAUSE FOR SILENT LISTENING

Who are the "homeless" in our Caribbean society and Church? In what ways are they crying out? In what ways, is the Church called to listen to them?



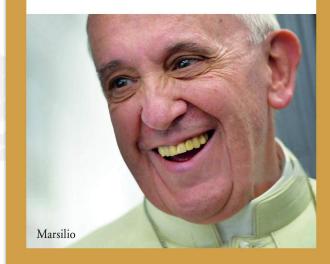
In exercising our responsibility to care of the earth, God gifted the human family with a unique feature call – **difference.** 



"The Samaritan discovered an innkeeper who would care for the man; we too are called to unite as a family that is stronger than the sum of small individual members. For "the whole is greater than the part, but it is also greater than the sum of its parts". (Fratelli Tutti, 60)



INTRODUZIONE DI ANTONIO SPADARO





"Let us renounce the pettiness and resentment of useless in-fighting and constant confrontation. Let us stop feeling sorry for ourselves and acknowledge our crimes, our apathy, our lies. Reparation and reconciliation will give us new life and set us all free from fear."







### Genesis 4:10

And the LORD said,
"What have you done?
The voice of your brother's blood
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## PAUSE FOR SILENT LISTENING

- 1. Who are the persons in your family, parish, religious community, society, organization who have made themselves "homeless"?
- 2. Who are the persons our Caribbean region who have made themselves "homeless"?
- 3. What do you think they may want to say to the Church?

# The Cry Of The Poor





