

GATHERED INSPIRED SENT



We live in a very noisy world. It seems that every day more noise is added to our life experience. From protests of blatant injustices, uncertainties in our government, to our concerns about the pandemic, more and more noise filters into our lives, our minds and souls. It seems that as more noise becomes a part of our daily reality, the less able we are to listen or have the ability to listen well to each other, and, most importantly, to the necessary voices in our life. The necessary voices in our lives are those of our mentors whose wisdom guides us through such moments as the present. The most necessary voice to hear is that of Jesus. Listening to Jesus' voice, we hear

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the call to be peaceful as He gives us rest from our labors. The Lord speaks love and mercy to our tired souls and speaks peace to our restless minds. To learn to listen well is necessary if we are to hopefully navigate the stress and anxiety of these days.

The ability to listen and listen well isn't hard if we are willing to step aside from the

relentless news and talk of the media and the seemingly endless ideas of the masses. To listen begins with acknowledging that Jesus' voice needs to fill the spaces of our lives more than anything else. It is to want to experience the deep rest and peace of Jesus that only He can give. Jesus' voice reminds us that we are good, that we are loved, that we are cared for, and, most importantly, that we have nothing to be afraid of for He is at our side. It seems, as we face a noisy world with so many conflicting thoughts, ideas and views, and so many voices calling for our attention, that more than ever we need to learn to listen and listen well. We need to listen well to the call of the Lord in our lives.

The vow of obedience that consecrated religious take is to listen well to Jesus' voice, who calls us to bring His peace to our divided world. The Good Shepherd invites all to the sweet pasture of His heart where the calm of his love refreshes our tired souls and wearied minds. His voice speaks of our goodness and reminds us that our true purpose in life is to be loved by God and to love others in





compassionate service. But to fully and profoundly understand this message, we must be willing to listen well. The vow of obedience is the willingness to stop and listen to all the noise and voices of the day and to focus energy in bringing Christ's loves to these situations. It is in the quiet of our hearts where we meet the Lord to hear the voice of our Beloved who loves us that we may be His love to the world. In being able to hear clearly the voice of Jesus, we are best able to hear the needs of those around us: the needs of those who

time is to learn how to create space in our hearts for the voice of the One who says "I am hurting" and "I need you to heal me," to affirm the voice of the One who says "I call you, I love you and through you I love my people." This Holy One's voice reminds us "that no matter what, I will always believe in you." The vow of obedience is the battle to listen well to Jesus in service to the purpose of consecrated religious life: to witness the love of God to a cold, harsh and noisy world.

Reflection Questions:

1. How am I called to live obedience in my life?
2. How can I grow in listening well to the Lord?
3. In my discernment, where do I need courage? What is my next step in discernment of religious life?

cry for justice and peace; those who cry out for inclusion and for hope; those who seek mercy and forgiveness; those who hunger for a meal this day and a home to live in tonight.

The vow of obedience is an affair of the heart. It's the way to connect with the quiet of God so as to listen that we may learn what God desires of us. Here we find the courage to become the presence of God in the world. The vow of obedience is the way to perfect our hearts as a place to listen well to the voice of the Savior whose love causes us to live lives of selfless service. Obedience lets us clearly and deliberately hear in the voices of those around us the voice of the Christ who still suffers in His sisters and brothers who suffer. In living the vow of obedience consecrated persons learn to take the freedom God gives them and create space in their hearts to be able to listen well to the many voices that call out for recognition and help.

The challenge of obedience is to clear away enough space in our hearts to hear the authentic voice of the Savior affirming our call, blessing our vowed commitment, and courageously going forth to become Christ's love, mercy, justice and peace in today's world. The great challenge of our

While you discern your response to God's call for your life, you can begin to cultivate obedience in your life. First, make time each day for prayer which includes silence. In the quiet, listen to the heartbeat of God that says "I love you." Second, read and study what the churches teaches in the area of justice and peace and commit to respond to hatred with love. Third, begin to cultivate the vow of obedience in your life by simply realizing how loved you are by God and that God is inviting you to a life where you can use the freedom he has given you to make others free by listening to their voice and responding to their needs with the love of Jesus.

The vow of obedience is not blindly following rules and orders, but the willingness to listen well so that one can love well through compassionate service. Obedience is to listen well that we may love deeply that others may find peace.

Know that we Servites are praying for you. Be well and blessed.

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