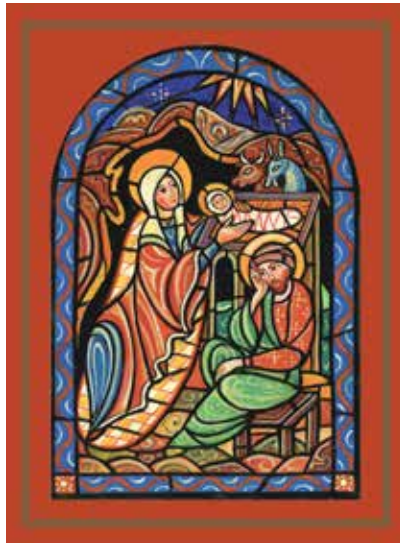


## THE PRINCE OF SILENCE

Christmas 2017

Dear Friend of Clear Creek Abbey,

**A**s angry voices fuel the endless debates of partisan politics and simple souls find themselves ever more confused amid the struggles of a society having lost its human and divine bearings, we aspire as never before to that peace which Christ alone can give, which is Christ Himself.<sup>1</sup> In a very real sense the path to that peace is by means of spiritual silence.



In his recent book devoted to the subject<sup>2</sup>, Cardinal Sarah explores the invaluable lessons that silence can teach us and reminds us of what a sane society might look like were we to heed it. He notes the relationship between peace and silence, writing, “Silence is friendship and love, interior harmony and peace. Silence and peace have one and the same heartbeat”.<sup>3</sup>

Let there be no misunderstanding. The purpose of silence is not just silence. Silence itself is not the ultimate revelation, as in some false mysticism that would lead us strictly nowhere. Spiritual silence (supported by the more material kind) is a lesson to us in that it sets the stage for the great message, the one God utters in the stillness of the Night of Noël. Following many a spiritual author, Cardinal Sarah cites the famous saying of Saint John of the Cross:

The Father spoke one Word, which was his Son, and this Word He always speaks in eternal silence, and in silence must It be heard by the soul.<sup>4</sup>

We monks of Clear Creek endeavor to study and learn this holy silence from the forests that surround our monastery and, better yet, from the spirit of the holy liturgy which we practice seven times a day and once in the night. Many guests visit us in order to benefit from this great silence that is a teacher of wisdom and divine love. May you experience something of that beautiful silence at Christmas this year, wherever you are, when the very Prince of Silence and of Peace is born again to dispel the darkness and noise of the evil that

so threaten the world at present. Please join us in spirit at the foot of the silent Crib. Blessed and Merry Christmas! And may God continue to bless you in the New Year of Our Lord 2018.

+ br. Philip Anderson, abbot

br. Philip Anderson, abbot

<sup>1</sup> Eph. 2:14.

<sup>2</sup> Robert Cardinal Sarah and Nicolas Diat, *The Power of Silence: Against the Dictatorship of Noise* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2017).

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., page 33.

<sup>4</sup> *Maxims on Love*, number 21.