

**The Downtown Chapel of Saint Vincent de Paul Parish  
And  
The Brother Andre Institute**

*“Thirty Minute School of Prayer”*

*Sunday September 17, 2006*

*Session 1*

*By: Ronald Raab, CSC*

**SILENCE**

1. **St. Benedict: “All prayer begins with silence.”** The beginning of responding to God’s invitation comes from the quiet of the human heart. Finding silence is not always easy in our culture. Befriending the journey of silence is the course of life.
2. **Silence opens the heart to listening to God.** We are used to speaking many words in prayer, but to make the shift to listening takes time and patience. It often raises doubts and fears for us to offer ourselves in relationship with God who is love.
3. **Silence purifies our desires.** A quiet space in the heart can release us from anger, self centeredness, inappropriate motivations, and confusion over our intentions. Love purifies the human heart and longing.
4. **Silence forms our conscience in God.** Silence raises the truth in our hearts. This is not always easy to view, appreciate or understand. The truth of our human experience is beautiful as well as intimidating. Silence brings us into the creating love of God.
5. **Silence creates the ability to receive the Word.** Our hearts are made for the Word of God. We desire this union. It is not always easy to receive this consolation, this hope, and this new way of life. The Word longs to continue to become flesh in our hearts and actions. This is God’s initiative.
6. **Silence opens our hearts to God healing our past hurts.** Silence opens the wounds of life only to be healed by God. God’s compassion and love heal the hurts of a life time. This healing moves us outward to service of others.
7. **Silence opens our imagination in God’s creating plan.** This prayer forms the heart in the mystery of God’s love in the world. We can become co-creators of love.
8. **Silence unites our hearts to the suffering of the world.** When we seek union with God, we see ourselves and the world around us more clearly. Silence is the birthplace for compassion, service and justice in faith.
9. **Silence sustains the prophetic voice in God’s people.** Without silence our words can be brittle or arrogant. Priorities, wisdom, and hope come from the voice of those who speak from God. God gives us voices of love.
10. **Silence gives way to union with God.** Prayer seeks unity with God. And silence is the road that leads us home, to ultimately rest in the assurance of God.