

Silence of the Senses

Teaching 2 of the retreat

Lourdes Pinto, October 20, 2023

This teaching is based on the book [*Holy Silence*](#) by **Fr Basil Nortz, ORC**. Lourdes found a striking correspondence between this book and the messages that our community has received from the Lord (gray background). She then wrote this synthesis of the two with a commentary. References are to the pages of our booklet "[Holy Silence](#)."

In this reflection, we enter into silence focused on **listening, receiving, and responding**. In the next reflections, we will focus on the 12 types of silence, which are degrees of purification and growth in holiness.

Listening

Psalm 95:7 —Oh, that today you would listen to his voice.

Matthew 17:5, God, the Father says, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him."

The beginning step of true silence is learning to listen to the voice of God that speaks to us continuously through Scripture, through nature, interiorly, and through the voices of others. Jesus said to us.

March 1st, 2022

I promise you, My little one, if you remain attentive in prayer, obedient to My voice guiding you (and the few little souls also listening to My voice), you will remain faithful when the tribulation knocks at your door.

Catherine Dougherty explained this point,

Silence is sometimes the absence of speech, but it is always an act of listening. The mere absence of noise is not silence, yet a day filled with noise and voices can be a day of silence if the noises become for us the echo of the presence of God and if the voices are for us messages and solicitations of God.

The Lord said to us in 2010

Silence is not necessarily not talking. I spent My days on earth preaching, teaching, and conversing with My friends and community.

Fr. Basil Nortz:

Holy silence is not simply a negation of sound or of activity. It is not a mere absence. On the contrary, silence is a positive reality that nurtures our souls. It protects the divine life

within us and allows it to mature. A person who is constantly speaking lacks spiritual maturity.¹

In April of 2022, Mary spoke in my heart regarding the meaning of the icon of Our Lady of Silence. She said,

I am covered in the Blood of my Son, representing that His Blood is my redemption. Now I am clothed in His precious Blood, representing my Heart as His living chalice filled with His Blood, His life. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, I am one with Love crucified. As one with Christ crucified with the Holy Spirit, I am one in the life of the Most Holy Trinity. In this union with God Trinity, I lived on Earth in silence and stillness of heart. I lived in continuous praise of God through good times and difficult times.

The green represents [that] I am the Mother of all on earth as the Mother of God. Green represents new life on Earth. (I thought of spring, all the green leaves appearing in the trees, grass, bushes...) Through me, with me, and in me, I give you new life in Christ, my Son.

To live in the refuge of my Immaculate Heart is to live being cleansed with the Blood of Christ, emptied of self, to also become with me His living chalice of His most precious Blood, one with my Son crucified bringing new life to countless souls in silence and prayer.

The brilliant gold around me represents the light of God. Through me, with me, and in me, as you live the Simple Path to Union with God Trinity, you become the light of God on earth.

In this icon is contained the entire path to union with God.

June 2nd, 2012, a 1st Saturday, Mary visited the Mothers of the Cross as we were praying the rosary to teach us of the silence of becoming living chalices. This is what I wrote of the experience:

I saw Mary interiorly. In her hands, she held a crown of thorns. As she presented me the crown of thorns, I received the understanding that the crown of thorns of Jesus was the same crown of thorns of Mary. I saw the Two Hearts in the center of the crown as ONE.

Then I saw myself standing next to Mary, holding with my two hands the crown of thorns. I saw all the MOC kneeling as they prayed the rosary wearing white veils and white gowns. Mary wanted to place the crown of thorns on each mothers' head, but as we began walking towards the mothers, she hesitated. I asked, "What is wrong Mother?"

Mary explained that each mother needed to receive the crown by giving their "fiat." I said to Mary that all the mothers had given their fiats to be victim souls, but Mary had me

¹ Fr. Basil Nortz, ORC, *Holy Silence*, (Sophia Institute Press, Manchester, NH, 2023). Introduction.

understand that our fiat must be lived in every moment, every trial, every suffering, and every hardship. She will not bless us with each thorn if we do not receive it.

I shared this with all the mothers, and then Mary placed the crown on each mother. I would hand her the crown, and she would place it on each mother's head.

Then I saw blood dripping down all the faces and garments of all the mothers. When I saw them all white in purity, they were beautiful, but now dripping in blood, they resembled the beauty of Jesus. At this very moment, Mary disappeared, and an immense force drew all the mothers clothed in blood into Jesus Crucified on the Cross. I saw the mothers as white lilies all around the bottom of the Cross and were being united through their blood in suffering into Jesus Crucified.

I remembered the words our Lord had spoken to me in the past about the MOC being the “sweet fragrance” that reaches the throne of the Father. Through this visitation from our Mother, I understood clearly how we are the “sweet fragrance” that Abba is so pleased with when we are ONE with the Word of the Cross.

Through this visit and experience, Mary was forming us, the MOC! She taught us the value of each thorn. We could not shed our blood without the thorns penetrating our hearts. The gift of the crown of thorns made us resemble the beauty of Jesus crucified. We were beautiful when I saw the mothers dressed all in white, but it wasn't until we received the thorns and began to bleed that we resembled the beauty of Jesus Christ. It was then that we were drawn through the power of the Holy Spirit into oneness with Jesus Crucified and our lives became, through the hands of Mary, a gift of sweet fragrance to the Father.

She also taught us that the crown is presented to us as a GIFT. Mary cannot crown us without our “fiat”; therefore, we must live our fiat in every instant of our lives. Mary today was perfecting and purifying our fiat!

On September 11th, 2023, our Mother of Silence spoke to the Mothers of the Cross, as I contemplated the icon:

Live in my cloister, my Heart, as my maidens

*Through this icon, I desire to draw you into my Heart so that you begin to live in me, immersed with me in the Holy Spirit. This is **my desire for the MOC—to enter and live in my cloister, which is my Heart, as my maidens.** I live in the presence of our Father, united as one Heart to my Son, and consumed totally in the Holy Spirit, my Spouse. **As my maidens of my cloister, you approach the throne of Abba with me and in me; thus, your prayers, being one with me, are blessed abundantly by the Father. He hears the cry of the poor.***

*The Holy Spirit infused in your being, as you walked in prayer to Mass, the knowledge of the multitude of souls that God's little mustard seed is saving and helping to redeem. **This multitude of souls will grow beyond measure as you enter my cloister and live your lives on earth as one with me.***

What is silence?

7/21/2010

*Silence is a virtue. Silence is a prayer. Silence is misunderstood by many. There are cloistered souls who practice silence but are not silent **because, interiorly, they are distracted, anxious, and chattering.** Silence is your soul in communion with God. It is in silence that you come to hear the voice of God. It is in silence that you come to see the face of God. It is in silence that you come to feel the touch of God. **Silence is the embrace of love between a soul and God.** Learn to enter the prayer of silence. The Holy Spirit and My Mother will teach you. Silence is not necessarily not talking. I spent My days on earth preaching, teaching, and conversing with My friends and community. Yes, My daughter, I lived in community. (Jesus immediately responded to my thought when He said "community") But I entered the prayer of silence daily with My Father. It is the gift and grace of the Holy Spirit that will bring you to live in this communion of silence with Me amidst exterior noise. On your part, enter daily the prayer of silence in the church or your home. Ask My Mother to guide you and help you in this practice of silence most beneficial for your soul.*

Part of the growth in silence is the silencing of distractions, fears, anxieties, and interior chattering.

In 2011, the Lord continued to explain silence. So, you see, my sisters, the virtue of silence has been with us from the beginning, and now Our Lady is calling us to a deeper union with God in her cloister, a union that can only be lived by the women and men who live true silence.

Silence in the Realm of God

7/22/11

*Silence is the realm of God. Silence is a state of being in union with God. Silence is as if ascending a ladder. You must begin on the lower steps to reach the highest. A human soul must begin to enter silence through the **mortification of the tongue, thoughts, and internal noise.** Daily periods of silent prayer help the soul come to know silence. The beginning steps of entering and living in silence are the most difficult and tedious. If a soul perseveres **in mortifying her senses,** the Father will bless her with experiences of coming in contact with the Divine. The human heart and flesh will experience Me. These divine visitations will serve to awaken the human heart to a greater desire for Me. These visitations will encourage her weak human nature to continue **climbing the steps of silence, mainly through perseverance in prayer.** The journey can be very hard depending on the strength of will of the soul, and at times, she might find herself descending the steps, but her **thirst** for My love and visits will be the fuel that keeps her ascending. My Spirit is the One that is her companion at each step. My Spirit is her help, guide,*

*and inner strength, but as of yet, she does not know Him. His life and light are growing in her being, and with her ascent, through the **abandonment of her will**, the life of the Spirit is strengthening in her. But it is in the fire of My Sacred Heart that you come to know personally the Holy Spirit. It is now that you have ascended into the **silence of the Trinity**. **In the Holy Spirit, you possess Me and the Father as One. The Spirit now lives in you, and you in Him. You are ONE. This Divine dimension is SILENCE.** When you enter this Divine union in silence, the soul must **be careful to nurture it; careless speech and careless activity can bring the soul out of this Divine dimension of silence.** My little one, you have ascended the ladder, and you possess the life of the Trinity in you **but protect and nurture this life in the interior silence of continuous prayer of love, praise, and thanksgiving.** Teach many what I am teaching you, for the time is short.*

God the Father chose to bring us the invitation to be maidens of Mary's Immaculate Heart after many years of living and struggling through the *Simple Path*. Yet, God permits that those who entered the covenant recently may also enter the cloister as maidens. This is the generosity and the love of God, as explained in the Gospel of the laborers in the vineyard (Mathew 20:16).

The silence of speech

The Lord taught us in 2011 how to grow in silence with the image of climbing a ladder. We must start at the bottom with the mortification of our senses at the foot of the Cross. In 2012, the Lord began to make us attentive to our faculties so that we grow in awareness of what is in our hearts. He said,

*Tenderness is the virtue in which the love in your heart is manifested through your faculties of touch, sight, and speech. God is love; therefore, here on earth, My love was experienced by many through the touch of My hands, through the gaze of My eyes, and through My words. I am a living torrent of grace, which is the love of God flowing through Me. When you come to possess Me, through the power of the Holy Spirit, My love flows through you. You become My living vessel; **you become My hands; you become My gaze; you speak My words.** This is what it means to be My living chalices and living hosts. 1/2/12*

My sisters, this is what Our Blessed Mother is teaching us with this icon. There wasn't a word, gaze, or action in Mary that was not in total union with God.

The Lord's message continues,

This love is manifested concretely, tangibly, through your tenderness. By being attentive to how you use your hands or fail to use your hands, how you gaze at others, and the words that flow from your lips, you will come to know the sin that

remains in your hearts. My Mother is forming each of you to be My living chalices. 1/2/12

Since 2012, Jesus and Mary have been forming the Mothers and Missionaries of the Cross to become living chalices through silence and attentiveness to how we use our senses and faculties.

Fr. Nortz:

Words can edify, encourage, and empower. They can serve to unite and create a community of love in the eternal love of the Word. Our words are among our greatest talents. Invested correctly, they yield eternal riches.

But when our words are not united with Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Word, when our words are divorced from Him, they are exposed to the influence of the diabolic. The enemy is the one who tears apart, who rips asunder. Words of unconstructive criticism; insults, which are meant to cut down and humiliate; lies, which mislead, separating us or others from our eternal goal, are abuses of speech for which we will have to render accounts. Christ warned His disciples:

I tell you, on the day of judgment men will render account for every careless word they utter; for by your words you will be justified, and by your words, you will be condemned. (Matt 12:36–37)

Silence of speech is essential for deep spiritual growth. In a certain way, the soul is dissipated by excessive speech, especially **idle talk**. Nothing of great depth can grow in our souls if we speak too much. As Max Picard stated, “When language is no longer related to silence, it loses its source of refreshment and renewal and therefore something of its substance.”²

Jesus said to St. Faustina:

There are souls with whom I can do nothing. They are souls that are continuously observing others but know nothing of what is going on within their own selves. They talk about others continually, even during times of grand silence, which is reserved for speaking only with Me. Poor souls, they do not hear My words; their interior remains empty. They do not look for Me within their own hearts, but in idle talk, where I am never to be found (Diary 1717)

So, what are we to do? We’re called to speak little amongst each other and speak much with God.

Fr. Nortz:

Giving praise to God is the perfection of the gift of speech. There is no higher use of speech than to proclaim the truth of God’s supreme holiness.³

We need to grow in the habit of continuously speaking to God.

² Ibid. Ch.1, Silence of Speech.

³ Ibid.

There is the exterior speech, and there's the interior speech. I'm sure I'm not the only one who finds myself talking to myself or having a conversation with someone else in my imagination, thinking of what I'm going to say. That is idle speech. That is not silence. When we catch ourselves going there, we need to stop it. We need to stop that interior talk and start speaking to the Lord. We need to start talking continuously to Him, praising Him, blessing Him, and asking Him for what we need. If we're struggling over what we're going to do and how we're going to handle a difficult situation, instead of speaking to ourselves about what we're going to say to the other person, turn that entire discourse to God. Speak to Him about it. That is holy silence.

At the end of a teaching from the Lord about what is prayer, He said,

The prayer of gratitude and thanksgiving should be your every breath. 8/23/10

Continuous gratitude and thanksgiving need to become our inner speech. Persevering in this practice will help us grow in holy silence.

Silence of the body

Cor 6:19-20

Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you were bought with a price; therefore, glorify God in your body.

Fr. Nortz:

This is incarnational spirituality... Because our nature is a substantial union of body and soul, our internal state is linked with our external behavior.⁴

That is why Our Lord taught us to look at our exterior to come to know our interior so that as we are purified, our interior is then revealed through our exterior. The more God is within us, the more we grow in holy silence, which is union with God, the more our words will be holy, and our gaze will be the gaze of Jesus. Therefore, we need a constant purification of our exterior to see what still has to be purified in our interior. It is a lifetime work.

The rhythm of a healthy life

Fr. Nortz:

The rhythm of a healthy life in Christ is removed from the frenetic rush and bustle of the world.⁵

This rhythm is hard, especially for those of us with families, lots of children, and a busy work schedule, but we can live it even when there's a lot to do. A holy rhythm keeps us in peace; a frantic rhythm takes away our peace. We have to be attentive to our bodies and discern the

⁴ Ibid. Ch. 2, Silence of the Body.

⁵ Ibid.

difference. When we feel that frantic life, we need to recognize the flashing red light that warns us that something's wrong; we need to stop and slow down.

The Lord said to us,

2/12/21

I cry with you

*My Heart is sorrowful at seeing the condition of the hearts of our people. My daughter, **I give every soul countless opportunities to turn their gaze toward Me, yet in their busyness, they don't stop to look.** My gaze is upon you, My little one. I see your pain and sorrows of heart. I cry with you, My beloved, for we truly are one heart. Know that this piercing of today suffered with patience, trust, and abandonment will produce healing in the heart of our daughter and liberation for her family. **Suffer, as you are doing, united to Me in My passion.***

Wow, think about this, my sisters. Every day, the Lord gives us countless opportunities to see Him, but when busyness consumes us into ourselves, we will not see Him; we will miss Him.

Fr. Nortz:

He is to be found in the stillness of the bridal chamber of our souls. Therefore, we must avoid the haste that leaves God and our holy guardian angels behind.⁶

Custody of the eyes

Matt 6:22-23

The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is healthy, your whole body will be full of light, but if your eye is unhealthy, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!"

Fr. Nortz:

Of the five senses, sight presents some of the greatest challenges.⁷

On August 4th, 2018, in a Mother of the Cross cenacle, Zilkia brought a statue of Jesus with His hands bound. The Lord said,

*I need you. I need each of you to bring My tenderness in mercy to the world. It is love manifested through the tenderness of God that has the power to touch the hardened hearts of many souls. My little ones, learn from Mary, the Mother of God, and your Mother. Her tenderness is manifested in Her silence as the love and mercy of God radiate from her gaze. **Her gaze is the gaze of God, and her***

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid. Ch.3, Silence of the Senses.

gaze has the power to penetrate the darkness of Satan. God the Father desires that each of you become the gaze of Mary upon the earth.

(How, my Lord, do we become Mary's gaze?)

By learning to live My tenderness through silence. My little ones, the eyes are the window of the heart, and it is I who dwell in your hearts. You must believe that through your fiats to be My victim souls, I have taken My abode in your hearts. Allow My merciful love to radiate through your gaze through the power of silence. The power of God radiated through Mary through the power of her silence. Remember what I taught you about silence. 8/4/18

In 2012, the Lord explained to us that tenderness in mercy is communicated through our gaze, words, and touch. I may be a quiet person, but my gaze can be penetrating and not in a good way. My children and husband know "the look." That look has to be purified in me because it's the gaze of anger.

God the Father desires that we become the gaze of Mary upon the earth. Mary penetrates the darkness of Satan in silence with her gaze of love. One look at our husbands, children, or at the most difficult person to love, with the gaze of God's tenderness in mercy, as Jesus Christ looked at us from the Cross, has the power to pierce the darkness in others. He did not look with revenge or anger at those who were killing Him, or at the man crucified next to Him who was mocking Him, or at the Pharisees. He gazed at everyone with tenderness in mercy.

Silence

Silence allows me to be attentive to the darkness within me. When I discover it in any form, such as resentment, frustration, or agitation, I need to immediately give it to the Lord. I must enter the silence to process in prayer what's going on in my heart. I need to give the Lord my contaminated blood by giving Him my anger and agitations and beg Him, "My Lord, give me a transfusion with your Blood; fill me with your life, your love."

We women can be of too many words. Our natural tendency is to insist and not assist, but God is calling us to the silence of the senses to purify our gaze and become, with Mary, His light that penetrates evil and darkness and brings forth His love. This practice is holy silence, and it is the work of the maidens, the Mothers of the Cross.

The eyes

St. Josemaría Escrivá wrote, "The eyes! Through them, much wickedness enters into the soul. How many experiences like David's! If you guard your eyes, you'll be assured of guarding your heart!"

Therefore, we have to be cautious not only about how we gaze at others but also what we look at. In a seductive world, we must be hypervigilant. Everything we look at enters our hearts and has an effect on our souls. It either blesses or contaminates us. We have to avoid watching anything that is not chaste. Not only are there soap operas, but now we have all kinds of "series." Just ask yourselves, "Would Mary watch this?" Mary is who we're modeling our lives to be like.

Violence also has an effect on our hearts and souls. What do we do if we're married to men who love violent movies? My husband is an exceptional man, but he likes violent movies. I do not watch them with him. We've been married 45 years, and I can tell my husband, "Sweetheart,

I can't watch that." After so many years of marriage, he knows what I will watch and what I won't. So, he watches his movies, and I don't tell him, 'Don't watch that; that's not good for you.' I don't insist. He watches whatever he wants. He's a grown man, but I'm also a grown woman, and I can choose what I watch or I don't watch. Friday nights are date nights with my husband, and it would take us an hour to find a movie that Lourdes would like, so my husband ordered Pure Flix for our TV. Some of those movies are a bit corny, and others are really good, but because he loves me, he enjoys the corny movies with me. We have to uphold the dignity of holy womanhood that God has given us. By doing so, we bless our men and children. Even if they're not following, just the fact that they're witnessing our lives as holy women is a blessing for the family.

My sisters, a great evil of these times with the eyes is pornography. It can exist in our families, our husbands, children, fathers, grandfathers, and women. It has spread like wildfire. It's in the Church, in our priests, and seminarians. Many are addicted to pornography. If anyone in our home is addicted to pornography, including our husbands, we ought to be compelled to live as victim souls for them. This is a battle with evil; it is satanic.

God has given us the gift of sight to serve Him better.

As the eyes of servants look to the hand of their master . . . so our eyes look to the Lord.
—Ps 123:2.

We are God's assistants as His maidens. Therefore, our eyes have to always be looking at our Spouse (Jesus). How has the Lord formed our gaze as Mothers of the Cross?

March 2nd, 2013,

Watch Me. Gaze into the Eyes of Love, and I will be your strength to persevere in love.

June 24th, 2016

Allow My gaze to immerse you in My pain and agony of love for souls (participating with your beloved Spouse so that He is not alone). The hour has come; remain with Me. I bless you, My little one, with My gaze of Divine Love.

God is always gazing at us. The silence of the eyes, body, and heart will allow us to continuously gaze back at Him. That is true silence.

November 3rd, 2017,

Words from Mary as the Mother of Sorrows (mourning):

It is a time of mourning, mourning for Jerusalem and the entire world. My Son has not been contemplated hanging on the wood of the Cross; His gaze of love has been ignored; His cry for Jerusalem has been ignored.

Excessive television, computers, and phones have taken the eyes and attentiveness of an entire world to constant images and away from Christ. There is a lack of silence. We, as her maidens, must live the opposite.

April 27th, 2021, Jesus said,

I am alive and present in every human suffering

*You are feeling the weight of My sorrows for humanity. Love is not known. Love is not loved. I am the way to learn how to love according to God's Will. **If every soul kept their gaze on Me as they suffer, they would learn how to love the way I have loved them.***

In every suffering that God permits in our lives, whatever it may be, if we turn our gaze to the suffering of Jesus, He will take us from being self-centered to being Christ-centered. We persevere in love by learning to discipline our minds, eyes, and hearts to gaze back at Him and see Him in our suffering. The Lord promises that we will enter union with God if we suffer ALL with Him. He summons us to teach this:

Teach every soul how to gaze upon Me in their suffering to encounter Love. There is no other way to love me as I have loved you. Turn their gaze towards Me, the suffering Servant. 4/27/21

We have a responsibility with our children and husbands to teach them how to gaze at Jesus in their suffering. When my husband had knee surgery, and had physical suffering for over a year, I would tell him, "Peter, in your pain, try to focus on Jesus' excruciating pain in His knees during His passion. Suffer with Him for our children and family." I taught him how to gaze at Jesus.

The custody of the ears

Fr. Nortz:

Our sense of balance is located in our ears. Damage to the ears can cause not only deafness but also a loss of equilibrium. The same is true spiritually speaking. We can be spiritually balanced or unbalanced according to the one to whom we "give ear."⁸

Therefore, we should live attuned to the Word of God. "Whoever is from God hears the words of God" (Jn 8:47). We should attend Mass daily, but if we can't, we still should meditate on the Scriptures of the daily Mass.

Heb. 4:12:

Indeed, the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing until it divides soul from spirit, joints from marrow; it is able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

We also need to listen to His voice speaking to us in the community because we are called to bring to others what He has given us.

The Lord said,

⁸ Ibid.

6/27/16

Do not be afraid to proclaim from the housetops the words I speak in the recesses of your heart, for those who have pure hearts will hear My voice and follow Me, but the obstinate will perish.

Why are you in the Love Crucified Community? It's not because of me; It's because the words you read in *The Path* spoke to your heart. God spoke to you, and you heard Him. You listened, you received, and you responded.

Fr. Nortz:

The Fall of man began when Eve gave ear to the tempter. Because she patiently listened to his lies, she became unbalanced and fell.⁹

In Chapter 4 of *The Path*, we become aware of **the lies that reside in our infected wounds**. This is crucial for growth in silence because as long as the lies remain in our heart, we're listening to Satan. The lies are the voice of Satan. As we come to know the lies, we are able to distinguish who is speaking to us.

With our ears, we listen to the exterior world, and with our inner ear, we listen to our mind and heart, where both God and Satan speak. To recognize who is speaking, we need silence.

Custody of the sense of taste

Our Blessed Mother has asked for fasting. Fasting has been an important practice in the Church from the beginning, as well as in the Old Testament. Fasting helps spiritual growth.

Fr. Nortz:

The tyranny of cravings can give rise to many distractions that are a type of noise to the soul.

St. Teresa of Ávila wrote:

This body of ours has one fault: the more you indulge it, the more things it discovers to be essential to it.

...Cravings are a type of unrest, a lack of silence in our souls. To reduce the disturbances that our appetite for food and drink may cause us, it is helpful to moderate that appetite through self-restraint... When we begin to mortify them, they will start "screaming" more than ever. When you start disciplining a spoiled child, he typically throws a tantrum. But if you persist, sooner or later, he will learn and will become quiet.¹⁰

The more we eat, the more we want to eat. The more we splurge on ourselves, the more we feel we lack; the more we have, the more we want to have. To silence our senses, we have to mortify the desires of our fallen nature.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

Let me give you an example. A friend gave me a book on fasting, and, of course, it appealed to my vanity because I wanted to lose weight. Yet, I understood that our Blessed Mother wanted me to live a life style of fasting. First, I had to purify my body of sugar, and that was difficult because of my love of sweets. At first, I could not even have fruit because it also contains sugar. I was astonished at my cravings. I had never really dieted in my life, and the Lord began to make me aware of my physical body, my appetites, and how attached I was to food. My body reacted when it didn't have sugar, and I had to go through the withdrawal stage, and then, little by little, I started to eat less. Then I began a 16-hour fast six days a week and a rhythm of life of fasting. I'm not telling you to do this; I am just sharing my experience as I felt Mary forming me to live in the cloister of her Heart. To live in Mary's cloister, I must learn how to mortify my appetite. Now I have two meals a day with a small snack in between and my cravings are gone. I'm not even hungry. My craving for food was a distraction from attending to the Lord. The Lord is silencing all of me. I was amazed. Learning to live in the cloister is so beautiful.

St. Josemaría Escrivá:

The day you leave the table without having done some small mortification you have eaten like a pagan. You generally eat more than you need. And that fullness, which often causes you physical heaviness and discomfort, benumbs your mind and renders you unfit to taste supernatural treasures.

Custody of the sense of touch

Fr. Nortz:

The more a person is given over to the pursuit of carnal pleasures, the blinder he is in the perception of spiritual goods, and the less likely he is to desire them. It is no coincidence that the more conveniences and comforts technology provides, the sins against chastity and religion grow.¹¹

So, as maidens of the cloister of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, we have to grow in the silence of all the senses.

We end this reflection with a prayer.

Our Blessed Mother, thank you, our beloved Jesus, thank you for teaching us how to mortify our senses. Thank you for inviting us into this union of silence with our God. Thank you for choosing us.

¹¹ Ibid.