

**Our Sound is Our Wound 2010: Contemplative Listening to a Noisy World - The Archbishop of Canterbury's Lent Book:
Author: Lucy Winkett**

How do we listen for the voice of God within the soundscapes of our lives and how do we find our own voice? Our lives are lived against the backdrop of an internal and external soundscape. The sounds, noises and music with which we are surrounded in modern life have spiritual implications. There is also a soundtrack within us that plays constantly through memory, dreams, anxiety or thought. What are these soundscapes, and how do we listen for the voice of God within them. How too do we find our own voice? These questions bring together the previous academic interest (history and sociology) and the present, practical life (public ritual, music, and public speaking) of an author who is sensitive to the cadences of modern life, and reflects on this through the prism of Scripture and the tradition.

About the Author

Lucy Winkett is Canon Precentor of St Paul's Cathedral, with particular responsibility for music and liturgy. Before ordination, she trained as a soprano, and lived in a L'Arche community. She is a contributor to Radio 4's Thought for the Day, speaks regularly at Greenbelt Arts Festival, writes a monthly column for Third Way magazine and is a founding adviser for the public theology thinktank Theos. She combines her cathedral ministry with chairing the governors of a new Church of England Academy in North London, leading retreats, and speaking and writing on culture, gender and religion.

**Cloister Talks: Learning from My Friends the Monks
Author: Jon Sweeney**

Protestant author Jon Sweeney (Almost Catholic) reports on more than 20 years of conversations he's had with monks in Massachusetts, Kentucky and Georgia. In his search for God, he encountered Trappist monk M. Basil Pennington and a number of other memorable characters who were eager to share their decades of cloistered experience with him. As a non-Catholic layman, Sweeney asks pointed questions about many aspects of monastic spirituality and elicits warm reflections on abbey life. Background information on Cistercian and Benedictine orders and quotes from such writers as Thomas Merton, Graham Greene, Evelyn Underhill and George Herbert provide a counterpoint to the voices of a fast-disappearing generation of contemplatives.

While the dialogues are vivid, Sweeney's account of his own faith task of incorporating the monks' wisdom is too sketchy to be satisfying, and he offers little information about the directions his life has taken as a result. Adding to the monks changed my life genre is tricky, especially given the height of the bar set by Kathleen Norris's remarkable *Cloister Walk*. Less reticence, better writing and deeper insight would have strengthened Sweeney's endeavor to distill experiences that were clearly significant to him.

Pilgrim Road: A Benedictine Journey Through Lent (Paperback)

Author: Albert Holtz

40 Reflections: starting from Canterbury, going through France, Spain, Germany, Portugal, etc., on the way to Jerusalem.

In the view of St. Benedict of Nursia, the Lenten journey is an inner pilgrimage with Christ into the deepest parts of ourselves, to be marked not so much by external observances such as fasting and self-denial as by a deepening of our relationship with God.

Benedictine monk Albert Holtz develops that journey theme through meditations written during a fifteen-country pilgrimage during a sabbatical year. At the heart of each reflection is the lesson it teaches about our inner spiritual journey.

By applying Benedict's monastic wisdom to the everyday concerns and aspirations of modern Christians, *Pilgrim Road* helps contemporary spiritual seekers keep Lent as a positive, meaningful, and fruitful experience.

About the Author

Albert Holtz, O.S.B. is a Benedictine monk of Newark Abbey, Newark, NJ, working in his monastery's inner-city prep school, where he teaches New Testament. He has served as master of novices for twenty-five years and as a retreat master for Benedictine communities around the United States. He is the author of *Downtown Monks and Street Wisdom*.

Saint Benedict on the Freeway: A Rule of Life for the 21st Century

Author: Corinne Ware

How can we heal the rift between our daily lives and the sacred? How can we live a life capable of hearing "the still small voice" of God while experiencing the speed and sensory overload of modern life? This book is Ware's answer to these questions. She acknowledges that others have addressed the questions. On the one hand there are books which have significant depth but speak in academic or "in-group" language and provide little help adapting these insights to everyday life. On the other hand, there are practical "how-to" exercises which assist in very particular spiritual experiences but which do not offer integrated, sustainable, life-changing patterns. *St. Benedict on the Freeway* fills this gap. It "translates into twenty-first century life spiritually formative practices worked out in the past, creatively adapting those disciplines to contemporary daily life."

This adaptation is the heart of Ware's book. She attempts first to draw attention to our own awareness of God. She discusses how a "Rule" functioned for Benedict's time, and how it can function for us as a liberating reminder of God instead of as another repressive and burdensome taskmaster. Ware also asks how the hours of prayer--vigils, lauds, prime, terce, sext, none, vespers, compline--can increase our spiritual awareness even if our 'community' does not stop for prayer at designated times during the day. Also, Ware explores prayer in dimensions beyond the spoken word.

The author targets what she terms "something more"-people: those who want to grow spiritually but do not know how to do so. Typically these people go on retreats and hear inspirational speakers, but their everyday lives lack the luster of those occasional times. They go from one spiritual oasis to another, wishing for something that will sustain them in between. *St. Benedict on the Freeway* responds to this yearning as both a book for personal reading and a resource for small groups in the church.

About the Author

Dr. Ware teaches courses in spirituality. She was a clinical therapist specializing in work with adults, in marital therapy and spiritual formation at the Samaritan Counseling Center, St. Joseph, Mo., for seven years before joining the faculty and administration of Seminary of the Southwest in the fall of 1997. A Fellow of the American Association of Pastoral Counselors and a licensed marriage and family therapist, she holds the Doctor of Ministry degree in pastoral counseling.

St. Benedict's Toolbox: The Nuts And Bolts Of Everyday Benedictine Living

Author: Jane Tomaine

Though it was written nearly 1500 years ago, the Rule of Benedict still offers the practical tools for living a Christ-centered today. Here in St. Benedict's Toolbox, readers will find a primer on how to use these tools in their own tumultuous lives. Each chapter examines one aspect of the Rule, from ways of praying to ways of embracing humility, and offers suggestions for prayer, reflection, journaling, and action. As they learn to use Benedict's tools, readers will discover the power--and the timeliness--of this ancient way of life.

About the Author

Jane Tomaine is an Episcopal priest.

The Desert Mothers: Spiritual Practices from the Women of the Wilderness

Author: Mary C. Earle

At the dawn of Christianity, holy women went into the wilderness of the deserts of northern Egypt to give themselves totally to lives of prayer. Explore the unique spirituality of the desert mothers and learn ways to apply their wisdom today. Picked as one of the Best Books - 2007 by Spirituality and Practice Website

Who were the desert mothers?

These women lived in the fourth and fifth centuries, C.E. Their way of life came into being after Christianity had become legal and Christians were no longer under persecution. Some had deep questions about an expression of the faith that was taking on the trappings of the Roman Empire. The "red martyrdom" (sacrificing one's life rather than recanting faith in the resurrected Lord) was no longer possible. So the practice of the "white martyrdom" began to appear--women and men going to the deserts of Egypt and the Holy Land, and seeking to live out the Great Commandment: You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind, and you shall love your neighbor as yourself." (Luke 10:27, Dt. 6:5, Lev. 19:18) As scholar Roberta Bondi has pointed out, the desert mothers and fathers are remarkable for their daily practice of seeking to "love as God loves."

About the Author

Mary C. Earle is a spiritual director, writer, and Episcopal priest who leads retreats and workshops. She is the co-author of *Praying with the Celtic Saints*, and her poetry has appeared in a variety of journals and anthologies. Mary is an adjunct faculty member in spirituality at the Episcopal Theological Seminary of the Southwest in Austin, Texas, and assistant rector at St. Mark's Episcopal Church in San Antonio.

25 Windows into the Soul: Praying with the Psalms

Author: Joan Chittister

This prayer journal can be the start of a rich, quiet life of growth in interior prayer that brings peace and faith and reflection and wisdom to the clatter and chaos that is so much a part of modern life.

Joan Chittister is renowned for her work and thought. Each of the “windows” is a reflection that includes a Scripture reading, a reflection with your response to it that vary with the “window.” Each window ends with a suggested action for you to take that will extend the learning session well beyond the moment. (recommended by Agnes)

Seeking God: The Way of St. Benedict

Author: Esther deWaal

Writings and reflections on key Benedictine themes (e.g., listening, stability, balance, etc. This is, perhaps, not a book to be picked up and read straight through. A chapter a week or even a chapter a month would be good because each chapter is rich with insight, information and how to apply the Rule to life outside a monastery and within family. It takes a little while to meditate on what the chapter contains before moving on. The end of each chapter contains thoughts and prayers on the chapter subject and those are truly valuable. One could do Lectio Divina on the end-of-chapter notes.

Preferring Christ: A Devotional commentary on the Rule of St. Benedict

Author: Norvene Vest

Comments and reflections on the Rule of Benedict.

Wisdom Distilled from the Daily, Living the Rule of St. Benedict Today

Author: Joan Chittister OSB (1990)

"Wise and enduring guidelines for everyday living - as relevant today as when The Rule was originally conceived by St. Benedict in fifth century Rome.

Living with Contradiction: An introduction to Benedictine Spirituality

Author: Esther DeWaal (reprinted 1997)

Each chapter focuses on a particular aspect of Benedictine spirituality and offers much food for thought and reflection.

Spirituality for Everyday Living: An Adaptation of The Rule of Saint Benedict

Author: Brian C. Taylor (1989)

Taylor, an Episcopal priest with a family and busy parish life finds affirmation and challenge for his everyday life through the spirit of St. Benedict.

The Cloister Walk

Author: Kathleen Norris (1996)

A Methodist laywoman and poet describes her spiritual journey with the monks during time spent at the Ecumenical Center at St. John's Abbey.