



An Advent Blessing between Peace and Joy

As you stand between Advent peace and joy, may you look at both, and this space between, as an opening to silence.

What if silence is mainly God's language and abiding presence?

Solitary and author, **Maggie Ross**, invites us to ask, "What is the quality of silence in this text, experience, or person?" We can ask this of ourselves, the services we are curating, and the scripture texts guiding us.

"Silence is so much a part of their world [of the Bible] that the texts rarely mention it," says Ross. But if we know silence is the key that unlocks their meaning, we can read in startling and illuminating ways.

In the prophetic reversals of **Mary's song** is a deep and abiding peace that underlies all the chaos, violence, and oppressions named in her anthem. She speaks joy (Magnificat!) from her wellspring of adoration of the Holy. Her encounter with the sacred infuses each word. She sees the world, castles of words and power, from a different point of view. The silence at the root in Mary's prayer, a deep abiding with God, transfigures, what Mary sees and what she can sing about it.

Another writer named Maggie, singer-songwriter, Maggie Rogers creates and records lyrics and music, with a profound silence of honesty and transparency. She sings of longing and loss. She also sees the world with a clear eye and an open heart. She brings a **camp song to life** with nothing but voice and crickets. She sings of body and breath. Maggie takes us places with her music. The quality of silence in her catalogue contains joy even when her heart is breaking.

How can silence become as Ross says "a tool of interpretation and analysis" in your work of pastoring, preaching, and crafting worship this week?

What is the core quality of silence in your life? Your praying?
Your relationships? Your vocation?

