

## FROM THE PASTOR

My dear brothers and sisters,

This weekend's first reading from the First Book of Kings tells us part of the beautiful story of Elijah. His life has been threatened by the evil queen Jezebel, and so he has run away to the mountain of God, Horeb. In this moment, God tells Elijah that He will manifest His Glory to Him. Elijah goes out and waits. Before God finally "arrives," there is a heavy wind, an earthquake, and fire. In none of these does Elijah find the presence of God, but only in the tiny whisper.

Very often we ask God to show Himself to us or to speak to us, and we get disappointed when He seems to hide Himself. God, however, most often manifests Himself not in the noise but in the silence of our hearts. In our culture, we seem to have lost the ability to be silent. Think about this – when was the last time you had to wait for something (like a dentist appointment)? How long was it before you pulled out your iPod, texted, pulled out a book to read, or even picked up the copy of *Highlights* that has been sitting in that dentist's office since 2008? You see, we have a terrible time being alone with ourselves.

Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta said: The fruit of **silence** is **prayer**, the fruit of prayer is **faith**, the fruit of **faith** is **love**, the fruit of **love** is **service**, the fruit of **service** is **peace**. Which of us is not searching for, longing for peace? We need peace. But before we can attain peace, we have to endure the purification of silence – sitting alone with The Alone (Almighty God).

God so desires for us to give up some of the noise by which we are surrounded (exteriorly and interiorly), and listen to His voice of love. He longs for us to hear His whisper to our hearts: "I love you, I love you, I love you!"

It takes time to get used to sitting in silence, resting in the arms of God; it won't happen overnight. As we prepare to move into the craziness of the school year, I invite you – I challenge you – to make the commitment to yourself and God to shut off your electronics (including your cell phone), and sit with our Lord every day. Will it be for one minute? Five minutes? Twenty minutes? Longer? That is between you and God, but start with the commitment to give God time in silence every day.

I dare you to come to me in six months and tell me that sitting in silence with God every day for six months has not changed your life for the better! Oh, God has such a plan in store for each of our lives! But to follow His voice of love, we have to sit listening for it.