

May 13, 2025

Daily Reflections

Journeying through Easter



Center for Spiritual Development

WHAT DO I HEAR?

By Sr. Jane DeLisle, CSJ

An Excerpt from Today's Gospel

*“My sheep hear my voice;
I know them, and they follow me.
I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish.
No one can take them out of my hand.
My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all,
and no one can take them out of the Father’s hand.
The Father and I are one.”*

JOHN 10:28-30

Reflection

As I reflected on these Easter Season readings, I was struck by the question, “What do I hear?” The message of Jesus is clear; he speaks of God, the Father’s great love, compassion, and mercy for the people of every generation. Yes,

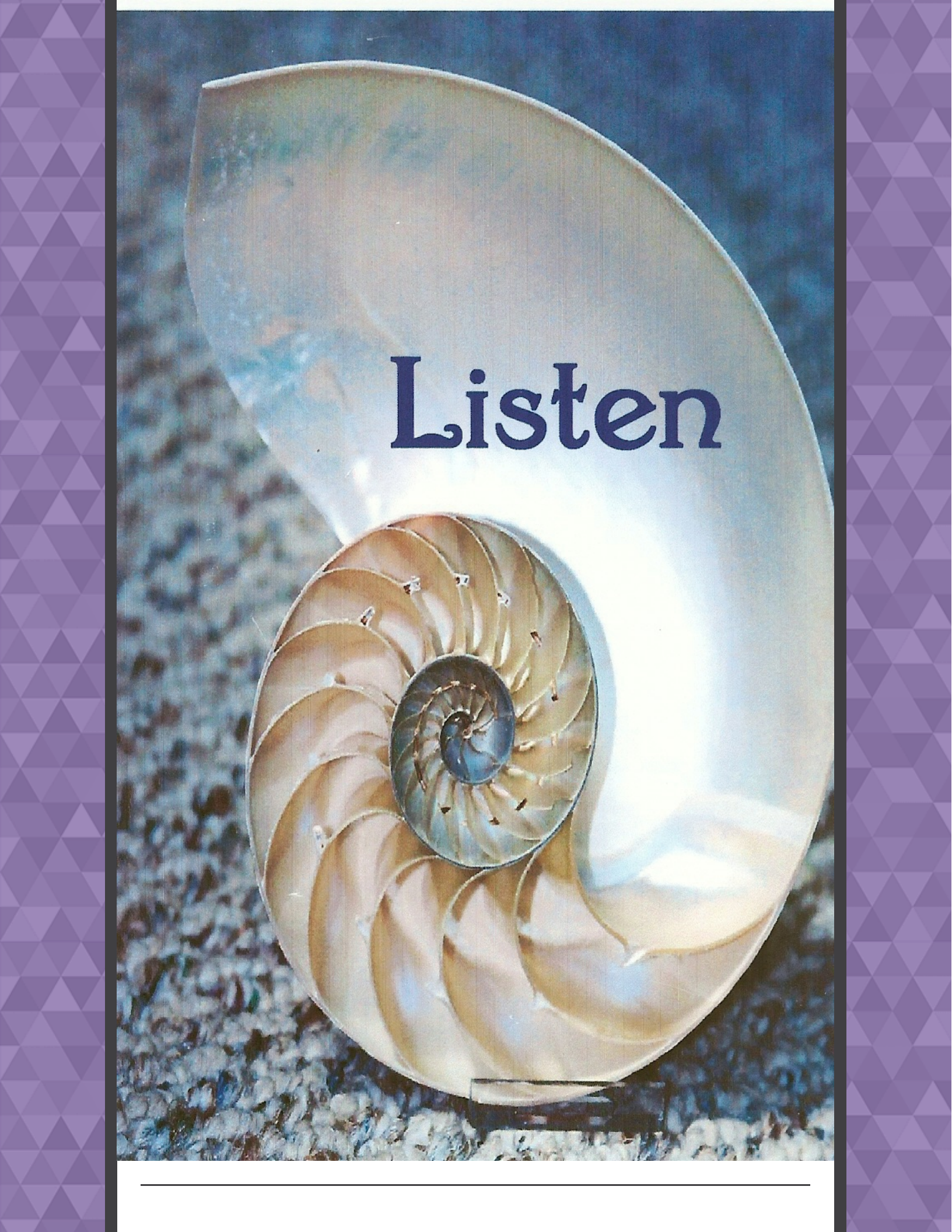
there is truth in reminding us of the sinful ways that plague our lives. It is easy to rationalize all my self-centered and self-protective attempts to negotiate life. However, it is very clear in my life that scolding, shaming, and accusing are not effective means to conversion.

I acknowledge that I need to take responsibility for my behavior -- both the wrong I can do, and the good that I hope to do. Nagging focus on the sin never changed anyone. Just give the “fire and brimstone” approach some thought. For most of us, damnation is a fear tactic that goes nowhere. Doubt, fear, anxiety, worthlessness are not from God. Only love and the invitation to claim the good within us changes hearts, minds, lives toward God. Maybe not all at once, but over time, consistent love can make a difference. It is love that calls to the “More” of who one can be and encourages fidelity to the best of humanity. Or as the song goes, “Love changes everything!” And I always have a choice. I need to claim the truth of being loved, so to act out of love.

What did I hear when I read of the apostles' preaching that caused a flood of conversion? They preached a God who loves and forgives and desires personal relationship with each person. As Jesus did, they acknowledge that which diminishes life, yet proclaimed love, mercy, compassion, goodness, truth, and forgiveness. Human respect goes a long way.

I am not talking about the “Valentine candy” kind of love. I am referring to love that goes the extra mile, that invites one to live out of the dignity with which we were created by God. It is love that invites me to embrace the stranger, the one who seems most lost. It means giving of myself when it is uncomfortable and taking the higher road of goodness over sinking into the mire of retaliation and hatred. Bad behavior and sin does happen on a regular basis, but so does living into the dignity of being made in the image and likeness of God. Knowing and accepting LOVE is transformative.

Which is more life-giving to you: dwelling on your sinfulness, or accepting God's great love for you and the invitation to love and mercy? Claiming love, living love breaks down walls that divide faster than demoralizing hatred and slanderous accusations. It is not easy; it cost Jesus everything. Now it is mine to live.



Listen

For Pondering

Ask yourself:

- How do I know myself as loved?
 - What helps me to be more kind, loving, and compassionate?
 - What do I hear in Jesus' teaching and presence?
-

For Pondering

The Act of Love is a traditional Catholic prayer that fosters loving as God loves. I have added the first section that allows me to receive God, who loved me first.

*Loving and gracious God, you have loved me so well.
I ask that you open my heart and soul to receive all the love you have for me.
Enable me to love as freely as you love.*

*“O my God,
I love you above all things with my whole heart and soul,
because you are all good and worthy of all my love.
I love my neighbor as myself for the love of you.
I forgive all who have injured me,
and I ask pardon of those whom I have injured.
Amen.”*

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