



## LISTEN!

By Sr. Jane DeLisle, CSJ

### From the Gospel of Matthew

*“Everyone who listens to these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock.”*

**MATTHEW 7: 24**

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## Reflection

The pressing question that arises within me in response to this verse is: how does one build life on rock? There are many quotes in scripture that name God as the **“rock of salvation.”** My own lived experience tells me that the gift of faith has certainly shaped me. Not so much faith in the sense of religious tradition, but rather, a faith that grows into a formative spirituality that nourishes and sustains my life in every way. Spirituality urges me into relationship with the Divine, the Holy One who is God.

It seems to me that just as human relationships deepen, grow, and become life-giving friendships, my relationship with God takes on similar personal qualities. Daily time and space for prayer, reflection, pondering life in keeping with values, principles, gospel teachings, and traditions give shape to my soul. The blessing that flows from value-based reflection and living give meaning and purpose to my living. Purposeful living and relating are treasures that continue to inform and sustain me in relationships, including relationship with God.

All this can be summed up as ***receptive-presence***. As a task-oriented person, I must consciously choose to BE PRESENT and not just drift from one project to another.

J. B. Metz weaves this concept into an Advent way of being. He writes , ***“If we are open and receptive, then we truly are men and women in waiting, Advent creatures, who allow God to approach them, and look forward to his presence.”***

Being consciously receptive to the grace of Presence is an extraordinarily valuable way of living within strong, life-giving relationships with those closest to us, with neighbors, co-workers, oneself, and with God. This intentional practice is a great way to build a house -- my inner house firmly built on rock.

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Image by Ville Aalto

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**For Pondering**

- What is my quality of presence with those I love? With friends, neighbors, and co-workers?
  - What gifts of God and of character are needed for me to truly be “receptively present?”
  - To what might God be inviting me during this Advent season?
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## For Prayer

*Gracious God,  
I come to you in awe and reverence,  
recognizing your greatness, power, and your infinite love.  
I humbly seek Your presence in my life,  
knowing that in Your presence,  
I find true peace, joy, and fulfillment.*

*Draw me closer to you, Father,  
and help me to align my thoughts, my desires, and my actions with your will.  
Remove any barriers that hinder our communion,  
whether they be sin, distractions, or the cares of this world.  
Help me to cultivate a heart that seeks You above all else.*

*Amen!*

*Come, O Holy Presence! Come!*

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