

# The Community of Reconciliation at Washington National Cathedral



## An Autumn Monastic Quiet Day

15-16 October 2010 | Washington National Cathedral

A Benedictine Spiritual Community of  
The Friends of St. Benedict and Washington National Cathedral

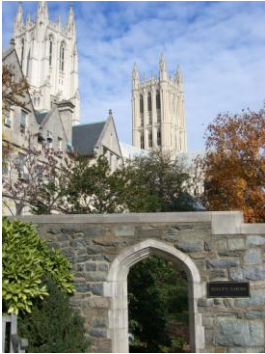
*Listen carefully, my child,  
to the master's instructions,  
and attend to them  
with the ear of your heart.  
This is advice from a father  
who loves you;  
welcome it, and faithfully  
put it into practice.*

Saint Benedict, *The Rule of Saint Benedict*

# Autumn Monastic Quiet Day

*How do we make choices that bring balance to lives that seem to have so many urgent demands? Can we navigate the pushes and pulls of daily living with action born of deep serenity rooted in the Holy? What will we use to guide us along our shared journey?*

For centuries— bells of monasteries around the world have signaled the integrating rhythms of spiritual life and practical living that order monastic life. And beyond the walls of every monastery— neighboring farmers, busy villagers, weary travelers, and grateful pilgrims— have heard a gentle call to these reconciling rhythms.



The Community of Reconciliation invites us to experience silence in the midst of our everyday lives as we create a ‘monastery of the heart.’ Our Monastic “Quiet Day” sets apart a full 24 hour period in monastic prayer and silence.

Our Quiet Day begins in our own homes on Friday evening and continues Saturday throughout the beautiful spaces and grounds of the Cathedral close. All who wish to set aside time and place for silence, reflection, and renewal are welcome.

As in a monastery, our quiet day is guided by the rhythms of several practices— intentional silence, observance of the Daily Office, individual and corporate prayer, the Eucharist, reflective reading, shared work, and the taking of meals together. During our time this ‘monastery of the heart’ offers a chance to participate in an authentic contemplative experience in ways that

nourish balance in life and reconciliation in the world.

Throughout a growing constellation of expressions, the Community of Reconciliation at Washington National Cathedral continues to provide the opportunity to experience community, wisdom, and transformation as we freshly interpret and integrate the rhythms of prayer, study, renewal, work, and hospitality throughout our lives. Together, we set our intention— to *listen* to ancient yet evergreen wisdom that shapes our lives. We still ourselves— to *hear* the centering call of the Holy, birthed in prayer, silence, and reflection. And we *live* from a place of radical balance— supported and encouraged by our communities of intention.

Though we ask that you register online at in order for us to plan for meals and room setup, know that in Benedictine tradition walk-ins are always received with open arms. There is always room at the table!

This Monastic Quiet Day guide will assist you with the practices that will be experienced in homes around the city and then with one another as we gather at the Cathedral on Saturday morning. Please print and bring a copy with you.

Our time together is one of exploration, discovery, and experience. Wherever you are on the spiritual journey—whatever faith tradition or perspective—you are welcome here. There are no right and wrong choices, only the way of intention and discovery. If you hunger for a life centered in the Holy that brings balance to life and reconciliation to the world— this is right where you belong.

**Welcome!**

# About the Quiet Day



Our day of reflection, dialogue, and shared silence offers a place for stillness and reflection that brings centering perspective and renewal. Surrounded by the autumn beauty of the

Cathedral and grounds we will explore life balance, reconciliation, and our own personal spiritual journey using the model of Saint Benedict. Benedictine practices of prayer, wisdom, recreation, work, and hospitality guide our exploration and discovery as we experience community, wisdom reflection, and refreshed intention.

Monastic environments set aside place and time to more readily experience the rhythms of silence, reflection, and renewal. Some of us have experienced the profound peace and renewal that comes from spending time in a monastic setting. Whether for a day or an extended period, these experiences help us along our spiritual journey and align us with the great tradition of Benedictine spirituality.

As in a monastery, our quiet day is guided by the rhythms of several practices—intentional silence, observance of the Daily Office (a way of Prayer at regular intervals guided by the Psalms of the Judeo-Christian tradition,) individual and corporate prayer, the Eucharist, reflective reading, shared

work, and the taking of meals together. During our time this ‘monastery of the heart’ offers a chance to participate in an authentic contemplative experience in ways that nourish balance in life and reconciliation in the world.

Join us at The Monastery of the Heart...

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## Our Setting

As you review the following schedule for our day of quiet you will notice we begin Friday evening in our own homes. Saturday morning gather from all parts of the city in Bethlehem Chapel for Eucharist. Eucharist is open to all faith traditions and perspectives. Following Eucharist, we move to the Cathedral Library to share prayer, simple meals, silence, study, intentional conversation, and reflection. Throughout the day, we will experience the beautiful spaces and architecture of the Cathedral Library, Nave and gardens as a backdrop to our spiritual journey.

Breakfast is included with your participant fee and we encourage you to bring a lunch to share or purchase one in the Cathedral Store.

## THE AUTUMN MONASTIC QUIET DAY | Friday in your own home, 6pm

**Friday October 15, 2010** | In your own home

- 6pm            **Dinner** (enjoy with your family or alone, note that participants in homes around the region will be with you in intention!)
- 7:30pm        **Office of Compline**— your quiet day begins | See *The Specifics* below
- 7:45pm        **The Great Silence**

**THE AUTUMN MONASTIC QUIET DAY | Saturday, 7:30am-4:30pm**

**Saturday October 16, 2010 | At Washington National Cathedral**

- 7:30am        **Eucharist** | Washington National Cathedral, Bethlehem Chapel
- 8:00am        **Breakfast** | Cathedral Library | in silence
- 8:45am        **End of the Great Silence** | Instructions for the day | Cathedral Library
- 8:55am        **Call to prayer** | Bell
- 9am            **Morning Office** | Cathedral Library
- 9:30-10:15am **Optional Conference #1** | *Praying the Daily Office* | Cathedral Library | with Kurt Aschermann
- 10:15-11:55am **Recreation and Reflection** (optional) | Bishop's Garden weather permitting | with Angie Dodson
- 11:55am        **Call to prayer** | Bell
- 12 noon        **Mid-Day Office** | Cathedral Library
- 12:15pm        **Lunch, Reading, and conversation** | Cathedral Library
- 1-1:45pm       **Optional Conference #2** | *Lection Divina-Prayerful Reading* | Cathedral Library | with Kurt Aschermann
- 1:40pm        **Call to prayer** | Bell
- 1:50-2:30pm   **Silent Prayer** | Mid Afternoon Office | Cathedral Library
- 2:30-3:15pm   **Community reflection and discussion** | Cathedral Library
- 3:15 pm        **Silent Prayer** | Mid Afternoon Office | Cathedral Library
- 3:30pm        **Blessing** | Clean up
- 4pm            **Evening Prayer** | Cathedral Nave | *Optional*

## THE SPECIFICS | For your Friday evening experience at home.

**Friday October 15, 2010**—Your monastic experience will be greatly enhanced if you begin Friday evening and honor this schedule in your home. It is important you take time with your family or housemates to explain what you are doing— why you are being silent and what it means for them. Explain that you have set your intention for a time to step away from the pace of the daily world.

With children you may want to show them this program and talk about how every one of us can choose silence to renew ourselves, to rest, and to prepare ourselves for our daily work. This is a wonderful teaching opportunity that just might impact your family life for years to come! Be sure to tell them you are going to be silent through the night (after you pray the Office of Compline) and ask that they not talk to you unless absolutely necessary.

Experiencing silence at home with the support of those who surround you models a goal of the Community of Reconciliation, to integrate the rhythms of balance throughout all facets of our daily lives and relationships.

Following is a detailed guide for Friday evening at home and Saturday at the Cathedral. Attention to the guide will provide the most authentic experience of a Monastic Quiet Day. As always, in Benedictine practice and in the Community, adapt it for use in ways that are “not burdensome.”

### **6pm**            **Dinner** (please enjoy with your family, friends, or alone)

Dinner at home is a good place to talk about your quiet day. This meal requires nothing special other than to be intentional about it being part of your quiet day. Knowing that you are having dinner at the same time as other participants who you will soon meet a wonderful dynamic to the meal. During your meal you may want to gently read aloud a short selection from the Bible, a sacred text, a spiritual reading, or favorite poem.

### **7:30pm**        **Office of Compline**— Your Quiet Day begins at home

Your quiet day begins with the Office of Compline. Compline is the last prayer service of the day in the Monastery. The service provides a beginning for our shared day as well as a prelude to the Great Silence to follow.

Compline offers us a chance to reflect upon our day— those things we have done well alongside those that perhaps we might wish to have done differently. Through the liturgy of Compline we acknowledge our shortcomings and embrace Divine protection through the night.

(If you have a *Book of Common Prayer* you will find Compline on page 127. The key Psalms are 4 and 91 which are traditional Compline psalms. Just think, you will be joining monks, nuns, and laypersons around the world who are all reading these exact same psalms at about the same time as you are.)

In the *Book of Common Prayer* the Office flow is self explanatory.

If you do not have a *Book of Common Prayer* or wish to simplify things you can use the following Order of Service for Compline.

You will need a Bible or a copy of the Psalter.

## A Simplified Office of Compline

*We suggest that you read this office in silence.*

### Opening prayer

*The Lord Almighty Grant us a peaceful night and a perfect end. Amen  
Our help is in the name of the Lord  
The maker of heaven and earth*

### Silent reflection on your day/confession response:

*Lord forgive me for I have sinned against you through my own fault  
In what I have done  
And what I have left undone  
For the sake of your son Jesus Christ forgive me*

**Psalms 4 and 91** (Read these from your Bible.)

### Scripture

*Be sober, be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion seeking someone to devour. Resist him, firm in your faith 1 Peter 5:8-9a*

### Silence

### The Lord's Prayer

### Closing

*Antiphon— Guide us waking O lord and guard us sleeping  
That awake we may watch with Christ  
And sleep we may rest in peace*

Nunc dimittis

*Lord you now have set your servant free  
To go in peace as you have promised  
For these eyes of mine have seen the Savior  
Whom you have prepared for all the world to see  
A light to enlighten the nations  
And the glory of your people, Israel*

*Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, As it was in the beginning is now and will be forever. AMEN*

Repeat antiphon

**7:45pm**

**The Great Silence**— In a monastery conversation ends after Compline and continues through breakfast the next day. We will follow the same practice so please refrain from speaking after this point. Plan to begin the Great Silence immediately following the Office of Compline. We suggest you retire early to be ready for the full day on Saturday.

## Saturday October 16, 2010 | For your experience at Washington National Cathedral

In some monasteries the monks and nuns wake at 3:30 am to begin their day. We aren't suggesting you do that (unless you are truly adventurous) however, we do suggest that you rise early to prepare for a full day in our 'monastery.' Perhaps you will want to acknowledge God immediately, maybe even before you get out of bed. Something simple like 'Lord thank you for this new day' will suffice.

Continue your day of silence with intention. Be mindful of everything you do from brushing your teeth to dressing. Set the tone for your day by being fully present in all things. You may have to remind your family you are being silent (especially if you have kids). The simple standard gesture of putting finger to lips will usually remind them that you are having a special day.

*On your way to the Cathedral remain in silence.* Keep the radio off in the car and if traveling with someone else to the Cathedral refrain from talking. Simply remain at your seat following Eucharist, then Kurt and Angie will guide all to the Cathedral Library.

If you are at distance or not able to join us for other reasons you can use this guide to participate at home. Every intention to experience the rhythms of silence and prayer is honored, wherever you are located.

**7:30am**      **Eucharist** | Washington National Cathedral, Bethlehem Chapel  
Remember we are still in silence. We speak when called for during the Eucharist but conversation is discouraged. On arrival please join the rest of our participants by sitting in the rear, right hand side of the chapel (as you face the altar). You will see Kurt and Angie there to identify our group.

Following the Eucharist we will process to the Cathedral Library. Remember we are still in the Great Silence.

**8:00am**      **Breakfast** | Cathedral Library | in silence  
We will take our meal in silence. After our meal we will honor the practice of work by placing our dishes as directed. Some will be asked to help with clean up.

**8:45am**      **End of the Great Silence** | Kurt Aschermann | Instructions

**8:55am**      **Call to prayer** | Bell  
Throughout our day, we will sound a bell five minutes before each prayer service. You are asked to immediately go to the Chapel when you hear the bell so the Office can begin promptly as scheduled. (St. Benedict required that the monks/nuns drop what they are doing when they heard the bell and hasten to the chapel for 'nothing is to be preferred to the work of God.')

**9:00am**      **Morning Office** | Cathedral Library  
During our three services we will pray using the *Episcopal Book of Common Prayer* (provided.) Our chairs will be situated opposite each other so we can read the Psalms antiphonally. We will also use a more contemplative way to pray the Office together and will 'practice' this method before beginning the Office. Some will be asked to read scripture and lead prayer.

**9:30-10:15am**      **Optional Conference #1** | *Praying the Daily Office: A Discipline for All*  
Cathedral Library | Kurt Aschermann

Many assert that for lay contemplatives to experience the power of Benedictine spirituality they need to participate in The Daily Office, the most basic exercise of the monastery. In this conference we will explore how to pray the Office using

*The Book of Common Prayer* and how to pray a simplified Office using your Bible or another sacred text.

(Both conferences during our retreat are *voluntary*. If you wish to participate, go directly to the Cathedral Library at the assigned time. If you do not wish to participate feel free to use the time as you see fit either in the Cathedral Library or elsewhere on the Cathedral Close. Please make sure to keep track of the time if you leave the Cathedral Library so you can participate in the next Office.)

**10:15-11:55am** **Private time** for prayer, journaling, silence.

We ask that you respect those that wish to remain silent during this time. Refreshments are available where; again, we ask that you reduce conversation to a minimum.

**11:55am** **Call to prayer** | Bell

**12 noon** **Mid-Day Office** | Cathedral Library

**12:15pm** **Lunch** and conversation – Cathedral Library

**1-1:45pm** **Optional Conference #2** | *Lectio Divina (How to Use Prayerful Reading in Your Spiritual Life)* | Cathedral Library | Kurt Aschermann

The practice of Lectio Divina has shaped the lives of individuals and spiritual communities for thousands of years. During this conference, we will explore and experience how we can bring this renewing practice into daily living.

**1:45pm** **Call to prayer** | Bell

**1:50-2:30pm** **Silence** | Mid-afternoon Office | Cathedral Library  
We will enjoy extended silence together before praying the Office

**2:30-3:15pm** **Community reflection and discussion** | Cathedral Library

**3:30pm** **Evening Prayer** | Cathedral Library

**3:30pm** **Blessing** | Clean Up

**4pm** **Evening Prayer** | Cathedral Nave | *Optional*

### Notes

- Feel free to bring your own copy of the Book of Common Prayer, Bible, and other sacred texts.
- You may want to bring reading material (poetry, scripture, wisdom literature) for the practice of lectio divina (a reflective reading and meditation process) and quiet time.
- Bring your journal if you wish.
- Wear comfortable clothing. Cathedral architecture can create a wide range of temperatures. Additionally, weather permitting; we will spend time in the garden. So you may want to bring layers of clothing to adapt to changing temperature.
- You may wish to continue your quiet day even after you leave the community; it is sometimes hard to “come down” after 24 hours of silence—another thing you will want to discuss with your family.

*We look forward to being with you at the Monastery of the Heart—*

# About Our Leaders



**Kurt Aschermann** is an independent consultant who also serves as President of the Charity Partners

Foundation. He has also been an active contemplative for over 30 years. Since experiencing Benedictine spirituality at Holy Cross Monastery in upstate New York (where he has been an Associate for 23 years)

Kurt blended his active business, family and private life with a serious commitment to a balanced contemplative life. Aschermann believes his life is experienced best in silence, contemplation and prayer and play!

Kurt leads the Community's programming in Monastic Quiet Days and has been a member of The Community of

Reconciliation since its inception. If you would like additional information or wish to host a quiet day in your setting, please contact us at [companions@cathedral.org](mailto:companions@cathedral.org)



**Angie Dodson** serves as associate director of Hillwood Estate, Museum & Gardens here in NW Washington. Trained in art

history and museum education, Angie has worked in museums for 20 years, making her way through art museums, history centers, and historic houses before arriving at Hillwood in 1999.

Angie has also dedicated the past two decades to seeking a spiritual home which she has found in the Benedictine sensibilities practiced by the Community of Reconciliation.

# About Your Arrival

**Washington National Cathedral Directions** | For detailed instructions on visiting the Cathedral by foot, auto, or metro visit: <http://www.nationalcathedral.org/visit/>.

**Parking** | FREE parking is available on the Cathedral Close on weekends and after 3:30PM weekdays and (NOTE: Garage parking is free on Sundays only.) **PLEASE NOTE:** *Neighborhood 2 hour parking restrictions are strictly observed on all streets, so please park on the close. We seek to model hospitable relations with our neighbors. We ask that you respect our neighbors and honor all parking restrictions.*

**Washington National Cathedral** | [Map of the Cathedral Close](#)

Visit <http://www.nationalcathedral.org/pdfs/CloseVisitorMap.pdf> for a map of the Close and parking areas.

**Bethlehem Chapel for Saturday Eucharist** | [Directions](#)

Enter through the Way of Peace entrance (at the southeast corner of the Cathedral on South Road, off Wisconsin Avenue). You will find the chapel to your right as you enter, through The Way of Peace entrance at the Crypt level of the Cathedral. Participants will seat themselves together in silence and will fully participate in the liturgy of Eucharist.

**Cathedral Library** | [Directions](#)

The Cathedral Library is the two-story brick building toward the southeast quadrant of the close, across South Road from the Cathedral Greenhouse.





**The Community of Reconciliation** at Washington National Cathedral is an ecumenical network of individuals seeking radical balance in life that fosters reconciliation in the world. **The Community engages the ancient yet evergreen** wisdom and practices of Benedictine spirituality to discover the balance and harmony found in a cloistered community—right in our own environments—family, school, the workplace, and daily life in a complex world.

**Anchored through a complement of gatherings** and resources at Washington National Cathedral—and experienced through an expanding constellation of individuals, communities, and organizations—the Community offers a practical alternative to our often fragmented existence. **As companions of this monastery beyond walls we experience** daily living infused with shared stability, applied wisdom, and welcomed transformation as we embrace the refreshing rhythms of prayer, study, renewal, work, and hospitality.

The Community of Reconciliation is a collaborative venture of The Friends of Saint Benedict and Washington National Cathedral. **Friends from all faiths, traditions, and perspectives are welcome.**



— WASHINGTON —  
**NATIONAL CATHEDRAL**

## The Community of Reconciliation

*Radical balance in life that fosters reconciliation in the world*

To learn more about upcoming gatherings and events,  
 to RSVP or make a donation, or for additional details visit  
<http://www.nationalcathedral.org/community>

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