



Claiming your Spirituality for the Second Half of Life (Session 4)

I would like to beg you dear Sir, as well as I can, to have patience with everything unresolved in your heart and to try to love the questions themselves as if they were locked rooms or books written in a very foreign language. Don't search for the answers....The point is to live everything. Live the questions now. Perhaps then, someday far in the future, you will gradually, without even noticing it, live your way into the answer.

– Rainer Maria Rilke in *Letters to a Young Poet* (1903)

We shall not cease from exploration,
and the end of all our exploring
will be to arrive where we started
and know the place for the first time.

– T.S. Eliot in *The Four Quartets*

Nobody can go back and start a new beginning,
but anyone can start today and make a new ending.

– Maria Dorothea Robinson, Irish painter (1840-1920)

Jesus' question to his own disciples is "What might we do to encourage and inspire?", rather than "What elements of the situation are likely to defeat us?"

– *Sacred Space: The Prayer Book 2026* from The Irish Jesuits, p. 5

Some time ago, I was at a concert. As we waited for the concert to begin, I listened to the orchestra beginning to tune up. It was about the most discordant sound I've ever heard. Each instrument was playing its own way, in total disharmony. Then what happened was that the oboe, a quiet, little instrument, began to play and all the other instruments tuned in on its note. And gradually, all the disharmony began to calm down. Then there was silence...and then the concert began...

– Laurence Freeman, Benedictine Monk

It seems to me that our slipping into silence is very much like the tune of that little oboe. This quiet little practice brings all the parts of our being, one by one, bit by bit, into harmony. Then there is silence. And in the captivating harmony, we *are* the music of God.