



# SILENCIO

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## HOLY EATING

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One of the most memorable places of my childhood is my grandmother's kitchen. The smells, sounds, and tastes that came from that Southern lady's kitchen are all too great to describe in words. It was a rich sensory experience set in the community of family: aunts, uncles, cousins, etc. I believe my grandmother's spiritual gift of hospitality was manifested through her cooking; it was how she brought us together, how she loved us.

Food is a central element of our existence and identity. It began at our creation when God gave Adam and Eve the ability to eat from all things in the garden except the Tree of Life. At the fall, Adam and Eve took and ate from the one thing forbidden. Then in the New Testament we see Jesus as the Bread of Life and Living Water. Food is woven throughout our story. Whether you believe these passages to be literal or symbolic, the concept of eating is clearly central to our spiritual and physical existence.

Food is also a defining factor in every culture - how and what we eat. It is essential to each of our days. We are not able to exist long without being reminded of our need for nourishment. We gather together around food and it is a conduit of community: as we gather to partake both in spiritual nourishment through Holy Eucharist with brothers and sisters in Christ, and in daily physical nourishment with family and friends. However, as with Adam and Eve, the concept of receiving the gift of nourishment from God can be easily twisted to become us trying to obtain something that is not ours, that fills us in ways that counter our nourishment and health.

In Proverbs 9:17-18 (NIV), Lady Folly says to those passing by her house, "Stolen water is sweet; food eaten

in secret is delicious!" Verse 18 then says, "But little do they know that the dead are there, that her guests are deep in the realm of the dead."

So how do we know if we are eating in the manner of Adam, Eve and Lady Folly; or as Jesus, reclining with those at the last supper? One brings death, dis-unity, and dis-ease. Adam and Eve, through "grasping", "taking", and "consuming" what was not theirs, created separation from each other, and more importantly, between them and God. The other brings life, unity, health, and wholeness. Jesus breaks bread, pours himself out, and freely gives to those at his table. The disciples' response is to receive. By receiving the gift of food, we are brought nearer to the giver, nearer to those who partake with us, and nearer to our own wholeness. Just as my grandmother gave and loved freely through her cooking, Jesus gives us our daily bread.

As you sit at table, as you receive into your own temple of Christ, may you eat for life, joy, community, and nourished wholeness. And may you savor the flavors that are the gifts of God.

*"There is a symbiotic relationship - cross training, if you will - between the pleasures we find in gathered worship and those in my teacup or in a warm blanket or in the smell of bread baking." -Tish Harrison Warren*

*"Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you." John 6:27a (ESV)*

# COME AND DINE

A HYMN BY C.C. WIDMEYER (1907)

Jesus has a table spread Where the saints of God are fed, He invites His chosen people, “Come and dine”; With His manna He doth feed And supplies our every need: Oh, 'tis sweet to sup with Jesus all the time!	Refrain: “Come and dine”; You may feast at Jesus’ table all the time; He Who fed the multitude, turned the water into wine, To the hungry calleth now, “Come and dine.”	The disciples came to land, Thus obeying Christ’s command, For the Master called unto them, “Come and dine”; There they found their heart’s desire, Bread and fish upon the fire; Thus He satisfies the hungry every time. [Refrain]	Soon the Lamb will take His bride To be ever at His side, All the host of heaven will assembled be; Oh, 'twill be a glorious sight, All the saints in spotless white; And with Jesus they will feast eternally. [Refrain]
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## SPIRITUAL PRACTICES

- Prayerfully reflect and journal about your own practices of eating. What do your reflections reveal about your view of food?
- Try having a meal alone with Jesus. Find a time that you either prepare a meal or dine out with Jesus. Intentionally invite him to be present with you at the meal, then take your time, savor your food, notice ways that God has created your body to respond to food.
- Plan a meal with others where you intentionally focus on how the food brings you together. Allow ample time to linger, to savor, to connect.
- Engage in the practice of receiving from the Lord’s Table in the Eucharist, then prayerfully reflect upon the experience.

## REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- When you think of your own relationship to food, which Biblical character discussed previously best describes your own heart attitude toward food?
- Are there any areas of sin in your life related to food? If so, can you take time to confess these to God and receive his gift of life?
- What does it look like in your own life to eat in a way that brings life, community, nourishment, and wholeness? Are there practical ways that you can move from grasping at food to receiving nourishment? Allowing more time to savor your food? Eating with others instead of eating in secret? Prayerfully considering the gift in front of you before you eat?

### A Prayer of Illumination:

*Lord Jesus Christ, the One who was broken and poured out for me, may You enable me to receive the gifts You have given. Grant that I may sit at Your table today and everyday in thankfulness and consider the daily gift of food that nourishes us, both physically and spiritually.*

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## SUGGESTED SPIRITUAL FORMATION RESOURCES

*Liturgy of the Ordinary: Sacred Practices in Everyday Life* by Tish Harrison Warren  
*Nourishing Traditions* by Sally Fallon



Suggested Spiritual Formation Resources are available online at [www.spiritualformationstore.com](http://www.spiritualformationstore.com)