

Seeing Past the Silence

a liturgy for engaging with the quiet student

I enter the room and take attendance:

Sherlock, Apple,

Lebron, Raine

All present, in body and voice.

Except for one whom my eyes grasp clearly,
but my ears fail to hear.

I stoke my judgment by marking "Here"
but sighing and murmuring
under the weight of my breath

Why do you even come to class?

My murmurs join the chorus of discord
and the symphony of shame in a multitude of voices.

Do I call on this one student yet again?

Do I fear the diversion of eyes and the

pin-drop

silence?

Or do I begrudge the chiming in of others
who seek to lessen the discomfort of a friend
but unknowingly rob that same friend of

fecundity

and fruit?

Teach this teacher, O Teacher of Teachers,
to see and hear
a different chorus, a new symphony
of compassion, understanding, and concern.

Teach this teacher, O Teacher of Teachers,
to compose a new melody in my heart,
that my classroom, in time,
might become one of acceptance,
consolation, and support.

Teach this teacher, O Teacher of Teachers,
to see past the silence

to the spirit that cries out to Yours;
the soul that whispers of the wonders

of a life that bears the Image;

the heart that beats the cadence

of a life made to be heard just as

groaning, booming thunder

hissing, crackling fireworks

roaring, crashing waves.

Help me make a simple *knock*
at the door of this student's heart,
in Your timing and wisdom.

Make me a friend to the friendless
and a listener to the one who has been silenced by
the worries of life,
the mockery of men,
the cloud of shame,
the clanging cymbals of failures and mistakes.

Give me eyes that see and ears that hear,
and let the quiet student
speak again,
sing again,
learn again.

Amen