In Silence I seek your face, O Lord

This meditation by the Grand Master emeritus, Cardinal Edwin O'Brien, accompanies us in our spiritual path towards the grotto of Bethlehem.

An entrance antiphon during Christmas week captures the tenor and the mood of the mystery of the first Christmas night:

“When a profound silence covered all things and night was in the middle of its course your all-powerful Word, O Lord bounded from heavens royal throne.” (Wis. 18:14-15)

What Christmas hymn nicely captures the same aura if not *Silent Night*?

Silence: Of that Christmas night, St. Luke tells us that “Mary kept all these things, pondering them in her heart”.

How can we pretend to celebrate the Christmas Mystery without spending some quiet, prayerful moments, pondering over the events of that night, inviting the Word, Jesus himself, to penetrate deep into our heart, “where no other presence might appear… and which only for himself I save” (St. John of the Cross)

Hopefully, each of us heed the advice of St Anselm which (again) I recommend: “Insignificant man, escape from your everyday business for a short while, hide from your restless thought. Break off from your cares and trouble and be less concerned about your tasks and labors. Make a little time

for God. Shut out everything but God and when you have shut the door, say with your whole heart: I seek your face; your face, Lord, I desire.” (Office of Readings)

Edwin Cardinal O’Brien

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