

THE SOUNDS OF SILENCE AND LAUGHTER – DIALOGUES IN CHRISTIAN LOVE

valedictorian address • leo peter jacoby • cranwell school • June 4, 1967

Reverend fathers, faculty, friends
and fellow graduates:

I want to say
in a different way
what John said,
and let my words play
with your thoughts,
because words alone
cannot make a good-bye.

Christians,
we live in a Noisy culture.
buses, planes, ships, trains, cars, trucks
Vulture feed on carcass of quiet Nature.
machines and factories rumble
the slumber of towns.
The Media scream the Messages
with a thousand-thousand blinking, linked
neon lights.
Mobile and Lonely people shuffle pass
dazzling sights,
adding hysteria to the Mass
culture that doesn't know
how to Dialogue in Love.

we are the Go generation,
the Action crowd,
sometimes rowdy,
but whose dance and fads
symbolize a Blaring and Mad
search for Self and social Identity.
yet sincere to realize the Simple need
to Be
in freedom,
to see
meaning in Life,
maintain order,
discover and share Happiness.

words are too heavy to dredge
answers from a complex world.
but Listen
to the Sounds of Silence.
that Music has something to say
about Freedom and Peace,
if the Will
will bend to pick up
personal Potentiality.

Listen.
Silence teaches and gives Time
at dead of night
to cram or quietly juggle
ideas, facts, and fancies.
as a growing Up Man-Child
and modern student
we have heard the sounds again and again.
but it's hard to Listen
when they whisper
about Challenge and Destiny,
and call us away
from trivia and mediocrity.
it is hard to be alone and on your own,
a near complete unknown.
it is hard to be
Different.

Silence is Alive
and Speaks: protest in the dining room
or Love when lovers' Eyes touch.
Silence isn't strained or nervous but
is Active;
while the absence of speech
between two People misunderstood
or understood too well
is passive.
Silence is Potent with Energy,
as the hush before a foul shot,
waiting to Burst out in a Bang.

Silence is Peace and
Peace is Strength,
if we say YES
to the design of our own personality,
if we say YES
to the holy Silence
found in this chapel or deep,
deep in our hearts where the best of us lie.

we are free to say no,
and mock or misuse the Beauty of Silence
with typical depression, despair and selfishness
that shackles the Emerging Fuller Person struggling.
it is hard to leave good times past.
but accept the uncertainty and insecurity
Freedom burdens us with.
and let Silence within us be the spokesman
for Victory, not failure, we've seen and will see.

having Dialogued with self in Silence
to weed out weaknesses and phoniness,
it is Time to talk Joy,
knowing the power and Good
every boy here is.
Serve society the Colour, Music and Spirit of your soul.
Laugh and shake the blue sky echoing.

Nature can be Silent and Speak the Glory of God.
You, Man, must delight in a human way.
People gathered together by the modern culture
should Laugh when they work or play,
just because they are Alive.
and Listen.
every Laugh is different just as each of you is Unique
and still so important to the Pattern of the Whole.
You have a Laugh no one else can make and give
and you live Just once to share it.

fellow graduates of the class of 1967 (*graduates rise*):
we leave to prepare the future.
but the next four years, the next year, the next hour,
the Presence of the present
is the Essence of our lives.
have Faith in the silence deep where God Dwells.
have Hope in your Laughter that Lights the world.
Give Love to God and Neighbor,
working with your Hands, your Heads, your Hearts,
your Voices, preparing the Way of the Lord.
Lord, deliver us from Evil,
grant us Peace and Joy.
fellow graduates, Good-bye, and
Rejoice
for His Love is
without end. (Alleluia)