

Part One

A Liturgy for Creatives

01 / What is Liturgy?

You may have noticed an increase in the use of the word liturgy across the Christian landscape in the last few years. From books, to podcasts, to churches, to sermons, to everyday conversation—Christians are talking about liturgy. But what does it mean when we talk about liturgy in the context of a life with God?

Derived from the Greek word, *leitourgia*, liturgy translates directly to “work of the people.” Liturgy is our public work of faith. Practically, this tends to look like ordered, structured prayers and statements of faith read together in the context of a community or church.

But what do we mean when we talk about a liturgy for creatives? We hope

the reflections and prayers that follow in this section will serve as a springboard for deeper theological thinking and spiritual reflection about the role of the creative in the flourishing of humanity.

Structurally, this section provides a brief introduction to key concepts for Christian creatives to think through, and offers prayers to be read aloud (as noted by the italics).

We hope this section will guide you in shaping a compelling public faith for your creative life and provide a framework for participating in the creative “work of the people.” Our dream is that this section gives voice to things you’ve felt while casting vision for what could be.



02 / Silence

It is hard to live on the Earth in the 21st century and not be painfully aware that life is full of noise. We bounce from notifications to social media timelines to advertisements to endless entertainment options. Most of us love it. Conversation is constant. We live distracted lives, turning our days into content that we fire into the world at an alarming rate. This hurried and marginless living is undergirded by the anxiety of always being “on.”

The ability to sit, without a phone or some other device engaging us, has largely been lost. But the art of staying in silence is a crucial rhythm for living lives of deeply rooted faith.

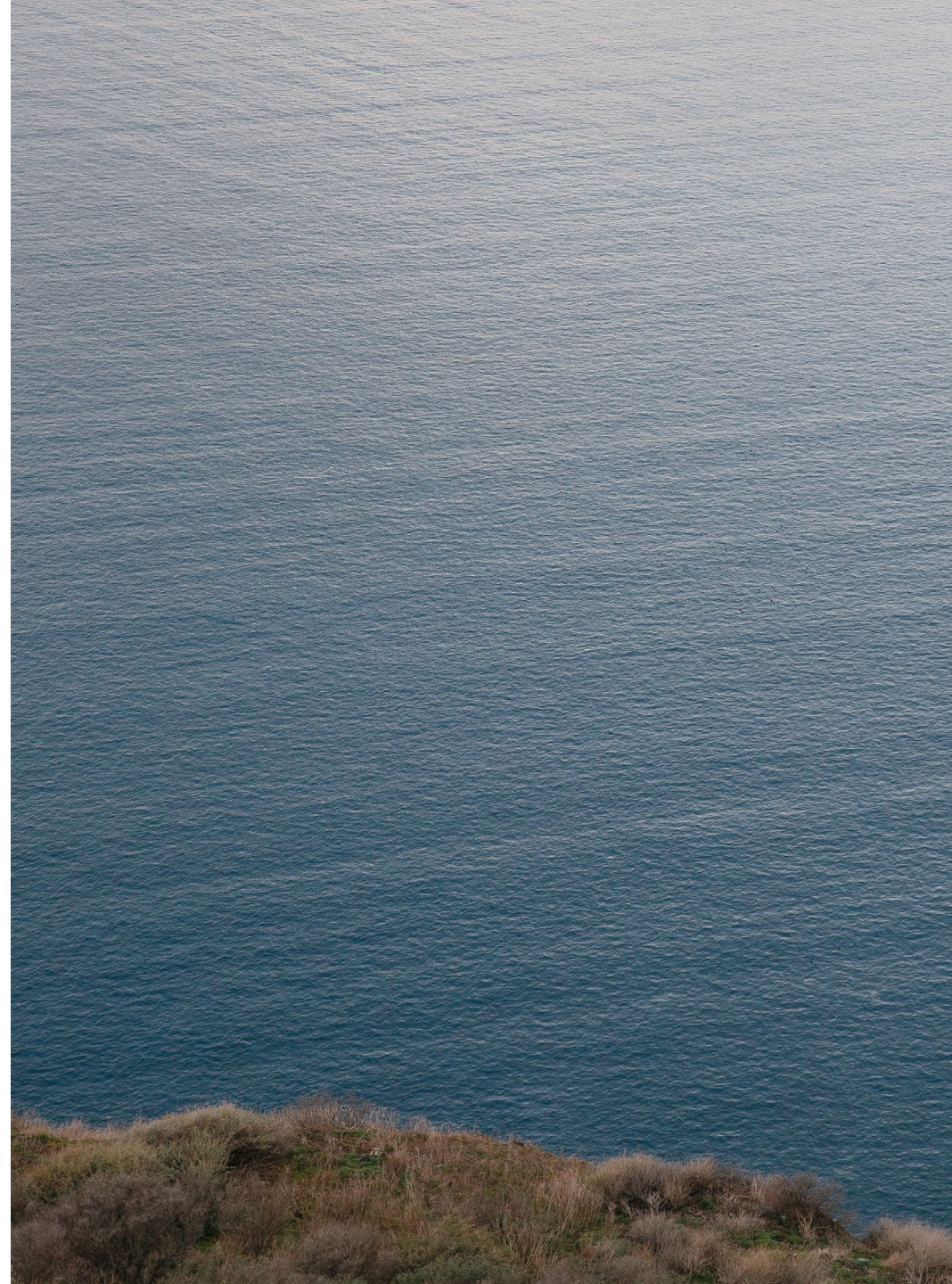
In silence, our soul is quieted. Our burdens—the things we carry, can

rise to the surface. Our pain and suffering can be named. Our chaos can be calmed. Our lives can settle in the presence of God’s Spirit.

Silence is for calming, for emptying out, for letting go. In silence, we allow Jesus to do his work.

This quieting creates a vital context for creating. Practices of silence, of disconnecting, of letting our mind empty ultimately sustain our creating over the long arc of our lives.

When we create from a place of panic, overload and anxiety we are not allowing ourselves to create from the deep stream of life that Jesus creates from. Creating from a place of overload and stress is like trying to live life in an all-out sprint,



eventually your body will give out.

Our invitation is to practice silence, to let the muddy water of our soul settle, and from that place of quiet start the work of creating.

Father, we come to you burdened by the noise and struggles of our world. The demands of living weigh heavy, and our work often feels like toil.

Jesus, quiet the anxious cadence of our hearts. We offer our burdens to you: our unresolved suffering, our confusion, our places of stuck-ness. We disconnect from our connected living to connect with You.

Holy Spirit, teach us to find your presence in stillness. In silence, help us find refreshment. We welcome the gentle teacher that is a quieted soul. Let our work of creating come from deep reservoirs of peace. Amen.



Part Three

Creativity in the Life of Jesus

01 / The Creative Energy of Baptism and Wilderness

(Mark 1:9-13)

At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. Just as Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased."

At once the Spirit sent him out into the wilderness, and he was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan. He was with the wild animals, and angels attended him.

The banks of the Jordan. The river. The life that is submerged and the life that rises up and into the world. This is how it begins: heaven torn open, and the Spirit of God flowing down into creation. The world is a story of things that unfold.

Before Jesus had done anything of importance, substance, or value, he is affirmed as a son, who is loved, and whose existence is pleasing to God. Nothing

proved, nothing earned, only a state of belovedness tied solely to his existing in the world. To exist is to be loved by God.

As creatives, it is essential that we consider the things that were true before we ever made anything. God's love for us is first. To be made in God's image, to be a child of God, is not a status we achieve but a thing that is true forever.

Before our making, we are invited to consider how we are made, how we are loved, and how we are held closely in the presence of God.

Our creating flows out of our *baptism*. The things that have died, the things that are transformed, the things that are being birthed.

Immediately after his baptism, the Spirit drives Jesus out into the wilderness. It reveals a fundamental truth about this life: that baptism and wilderness are always interlocked. New life and the space that



refines it are connected at a cosmic level.

When our creating flows out of baptism, we are able to engage with the wilderness.

Our new life and suffering are always holding hands. In Jesus' life, baptism leads to wilderness. As creatives, it is important that we not miss the connection between new energy and deep challenge. That our excitement, love, and hope about the future is connected to the pain, suffering, and sorrow of the wilderness.

In the life of Jesus, we see God's great unfolding towards life. It is this first love that carries Jesus through the wilderness, and it is the same first love that we must hold fast to in our daily living.





