



Sacred Stillness: The Role of Silence in Eucharistic Adoration for the Interior Formation of Seminarians

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Abstract: This study examines the role of silence in Eucharistic Adoration as experienced by seminarians, focusing on how it contributes to their vocational discernment and spiritual formation. Using a qualitative-descriptive method, data were gathered through personal reflections and structured interviews with seminarians engaged in regular Adoration practices. The analysis reveals that silence is perceived not merely as the absence of noise but as a sacred and dynamic space for encountering the real presence of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament. Within this contemplative stillness, seminarians undergo deep personal reflection, emotional integration, and clarity in discerning their vocational path. Silence allows them to detach from external distractions and become more attentive to God's presence and inner promptings. The results highlight that silence fosters self-knowledge, emotional healing, and spiritual intimacy with God, and becomes a source of strength amid struggles. Furthermore, silence cultivates a contemplative disposition essential for priestly ministry—nurturing the capacity to listen, reflect, and respond with pastoral sensitivity. The study concludes that silence in Adoration significantly contributes to the interior formation of future priests, offering a theological foundation for integrating contemplative prayer into priestly life. In increasingly noisy and fragmented environments, silence emerges as a vital space for spiritual depth and vocational clarity.

INTRODUCTION

Silence is a vital dimension in spiritual practice across religious traditions. Etymologically rooted in the Latin *silentium*, silence refers not only to the absence of sound but, in spirituality, to an interior disposition that creates space for the divine (Romain, 1997). In the Christian tradition, silence nurtures the soul's capacity to encounter God. However, in today's world dominated by noise, technological distraction, and superficiality, silence is increasingly neglected (Callahan, 1990; Mangunwijaya, 1988). This neglect risks a loss of self-awareness, spiritual shallowness, and detachment from one's true identity (Moi, 2000).

Despite this cultural shift, silence remains essential for cultivating a personal relationship with God. Pope Francis (2018) describes silence as a space to listen to the voice of God, not merely the absence of words. Theologians such as Vanier (2009) and Cardinal Sarah (Sarah & Diat, 2017) affirm silence as God's primary language, enabling communion and transformation. In Scripture, Jesus models silence during moments of discernment, surrender, and mission (Matt. 6:6–7; Mark 1:35; Luke 22:42).

Within the Catholic tradition, Eucharistic Adoration offers a sacred context where silence becomes a medium of profound encounter. Rooted in belief in Christ's real presence in the Eucharist, Adoration invites the faithful to enter stillness, discern God's will, and be renewed (Martasudjita, 2007; Daia, 2011). While literature affirms the spiritual value of silence, little research explores how seminarians experience and interpret silence during Adoration as part of their vocational formation.

This study addresses that gap by examining silence as lived by seminarians of the Congregation of the Mission during Eucharistic Adoration. It explores how silence functions as a transformative practice for spiritual clarity, vocational discernment, and emotional integration within priestly formation. In doing so, it contributes to a richer theological understanding of silence in contemporary ecclesial life.

This study is significant amid the urgent need to reclaim the value of silence in a world increasingly driven by speed, distraction, and superficiality. In the digital age, many believers struggle to engage in deep reflection, weakening their capacity to nurture faith and discern vocation. Reflection, as Nouwen and Vanier (1998) describe, involves awareness of self, others, creation, and God. The loss of this reflective capacity has serious implications: diminished intimacy with God, blurred vocational identity, and reduced resilience in facing spiritual challenges. Within this context, silence in Eucharistic Adoration offers a crucial reflective mechanism to recover spiritual depth.

Focusing on seminarians in the Congregation of the Mission, this study explores how silence during Adoration strengthens vocational clarity and inner transformation. By examining the theological and psychological dimensions of silence, the research reveals how it fosters self-awareness, emotional integration, and openness to God's will. In doing so, the study not only enriches the understanding of Adoration in priestly formation but also proposes silence as a spiritual discipline urgently needed today. Ultimately, silence emerges as a bridge to the divine—restoring space for God's voice and enabling seminarians to grow in discernment and readiness for their missionary vocation in service to others.

METHOD

This study adopts a qualitative approach using a phenomenological method to explore the subjective spiritual experiences of seminarians during moments of silence in Eucharistic Adoration. The phenomenological approach, grounded in the philosophy of Edmund Husserl, emphasizes the lived experience and seeks to uncover the meaning behind appearances by suspending presuppositions. The core concept of intentionality—consciousness directed toward an object—guides the researcher's attention to how seminarians experience and interpret silence as a spiritual phenomenon. This method allows for a deeper understanding of the essence of silence as a sacred encounter within their vocational journey.

Data were collected through in-depth interviews and direct observation involving five seminarians from the Congregation of the Mission (CM) undergoing formation at their major seminary in Malang. Interviews were conducted individually in a non-intrusive manner to

allow free expression, capturing direct reflections on their emotions, faith struggles, and personal insights. Complementary to the interviews, a literature and document study provided secondary data to support theoretical grounding and interpretive analysis.

Data analysis employed a descriptive and critical phenomenological method. The researcher engaged in data reduction to distill essential themes while maintaining the authenticity of each participant’s experience. This was followed by theological reflection, correlating empirical insights with Catholic doctrinal understanding—especially regarding the Eucharist and spiritual formation. By integrating phenomenological analysis with theological interpretation, the study reveals how silence functions not only as a personal experience but also as a theological space of encounter, discernment, and transformation.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Seminarians undergoing formation in the Congregation of the Mission face many challenges along their vocational journey. Though seminary life is filled with spiritual, academic, and pastoral activities, it can also bring psychological and emotional strain that requires interior balance and deep reflection. In this context, silence during Eucharistic Adoration becomes an essential element supporting the spiritual growth of seminarians. Through this silent practice, they can process their vocational experiences, confront inner struggles, and deepen their commitment to the missionary call—especially to serve the poor and marginalized, which lies at the heart of Vincentian spirituality. As St. Teresa of Avila once said, “God walks among the quiet soul and silence. In silence, we recognize His presence and hear His voice” (Suryawan, 2010).

The data processing in this report takes into account the demographic backgrounds of the participants, including their level of formation, age, and place of origin. By analyzing these contextual variables, the researcher aimed to explore how differences in age and stage of seminary formation shape the seminarians' perceptions and interpretations of Eucharistic Adoration.

The primary data collection was conducted through in-depth interviews. The table below (to be inserted in the final document) will present the demographic profiles of the five respondents, serving as the foundation for further analysis of how their personal and formational contexts influence their lived experience of Adoration.

Table 1. Informants

Code	Name	Age	Grade	Parish of Origin
R1	Blasius Diki A.	24	4	UP. Jati Baru Tanjung Karang, Lampung
R2	Christoporus Rinovan	23	4	Santa Maria Annuntiata Sidoarjo
R3	Emmanuel Reynaldo Gunawan	22	2	Paroki St. Paulus Sendangguwo, Semarang
R4	Alexandro Yulianto Mawo Radho	22	3	St. Maria Ratu Rosari, Lebang
R5	Alosius Alan M	22	2	St. Maria, Mamuju, KAMS

Understanding Silence in Eucharistic Adoration

The interviews with the seminarians revealed a unifying theme: “Silence as a Personal Encounter and Spiritual Transformation in Eucharistic Adoration.” For the participants, silence is not merely the absence of sound but a sacred inner atmosphere where God becomes present, and the vocation journey is deepened. Several sub-themes emerged, reflecting the multifaceted meaning of silence in their experience.

First, silence is understood as a moment of personal encounter with God. In the quiet of Adoration, the seminarians feel themselves drawn into the presence of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament. As R1 expressed, *“I understand silence in Eucharistic Adoration as a moment of being with Him—He who constantly guides me through the dynamics of life.”* This highlights how silence becomes a relational space in which God's presence is deeply felt and trusted. Likewise, R5 shared, *“It is a moment when I feel invited to be in God’s presence without needing many words or actions.”* For him, silence is not simply an absence of noise, but a space of intimacy and profound connection with God.

Second, silence is experienced as a means of listening and surrendering to God’s will. It is not passive but an active disposition of the heart to hear the gentle voice of God. R4 stated, *“Silence in Eucharistic Adoration is a moment for me to come closer to God and to listen to His will.”* This reflective attitude echoes a deeper longing for divine direction. In a similar tone, R5 remarked, *“Silence is not merely the absence of sound, but an interior atmosphere filled with openness, surrender, and intimacy with God.”* In this space, he is able to quiet the noise of daily life and become attuned to the subtle ways God speaks.

Third, silence serves as a source of strength and vocational affirmation. In Adoration, the seminarians find the space to rediscover the grace of their vocation and to entrust their struggles to God. As R3 shared, *“Silence in Eucharistic Adoration is an important moment to be still and pray before the Blessed Sacrament... It helps me realize that the vocation I’m living is a gift, and I need to rely on His will. Silence is the beginning and the source of strength for life and vocation.”* He also emphasized the importance of maintaining a reverent posture during Adoration, reflecting a holistic approach to contemplative prayer.

Fourth, silence is seen as a space to process emotions and life experiences. It is not only about listening to God but also about allowing one’s inner world to be seen and healed. R2 reflected on this by saying, *“Silence and aspiration are inseparable. In Adoration, silence is a moment to draw closer to God who is present in the Blessed Sacrament.”* For him, silence becomes a sacred vessel for expressing desires, struggles, and hopes before God.

In conclusion, the seminarians’ reflections reveal that silence in Eucharistic Adoration functions as a deeply contemplative practice. It enables a personal encounter with Christ, creates space for listening and surrender, strengthens vocational identity, and becomes a means for emotional and spiritual integration. Far from being empty or passive, silence is experienced as sacred, dynamic, and life-giving—a space in which the seminarians allow themselves to be seen and formed by the loving gaze of Christ present in the Eucharist.

Practices During Silent Moments in Eucharistic Adoration

From the interviews, it is evident that the silent moments in Eucharistic Adoration are not empty or passive experiences for the seminarians, but rather sacred times filled with personal prayer, reflection, emotional release, and openness to God.

During the silent moments of Eucharistic Adoration, the seminarians engage in deeply personal and spiritually meaningful practices. Rather than viewing silence as a void or mere absence of sound, they experience it as a sacred space where they can connect with God, reflect on their lives, and find inner peace.

Several participants use silence as a time to reflect on their life journey and vocation. For example, R1 shared, *“In the silence I experience, I often use it to pray and to reflect on my life’s journey—especially regarding the dynamics of my vocation and the relationships I’ve formed with others.”* This personal reflection links prayer with self-awareness, grounding spiritual discernment in daily life. Similarly, R3 said, *“I usually begin with a prayer of gratitude for being allowed to gaze upon Him in the Blessed Sacrament. Then I reflect on my life and vocation throughout the day, and I try to discern His will in silence.”* For him, silence is not passive; it is a moment of grateful attentiveness and searching for God’s guidance in the details of everyday experience.

Others emphasized silence as a means of attaining stillness and peace. R2 succinctly expressed, *“Silence. I unite myself with the atmosphere of peace.”* His words reflect a contemplative posture—resting in God’s presence without needing words. R4 also described his effort to quiet the mind and center his attention on Christ: *“I try to calm myself from all distracting thoughts. Then I usually express my gratitude to Jesus and refocus myself—sometimes whispering in my heart: ‘Jesus, Lamb of God, have mercy on Your servant.’”* This illustrates a rhythm of interior recollection and prayer, blending silence with traditional invocations.

R5 offered a particularly rich reflection on silence as a space for presence, openness, and surrender. He said, *“During the silent moment, I try to be truly present before God. I often begin with a simple prayer, then I remain still and let my heart open to Him.”* For him, silence is not merely an act of not speaking, but an intentional state of spiritual attentiveness. He added, *“There are times when I just sit quietly, without thinking about anything, letting myself feel the peace that comes from His presence.”* Occasionally, he turns to Scripture during Adoration, reading and meditating on passages that speak to his current situation. He concluded, *“If there’s something weighing on my heart, I bring it into prayer and surrender it to God.”*

In summary, the seminarians’ testimonies show that silence during Adoration is a time of active interior engagement—a moment to express gratitude, reflect deeply, find peace, and surrender personal burdens. Each one approaches silence in a unique way, yet all affirm its significance as a sacred moment of communion with Christ in the Blessed Sacrament. Silence becomes a space of renewal, where the heart listens more deeply, and the vocation is sustained through God’s quiet presence.

Changes Experienced After Engaging In Silence During Adoration

The seminarians' experiences reveal that engaging in silence during Eucharistic Adoration brings about significant personal transformation. Across all interviews, a central outcome of this contemplative practice is the emergence of inner peace and emotional calm. The silence offers a still point in the midst of daily pressures, allowing the heart to rest in the presence of God. As R1 shared, *"Yes, I experienced a moment of transformation. I felt calmer and more confident in continuing the dynamics of my life. For in many things, God continually accompanies me."* His words reflect how silence acts as a stabilizing force, grounding him in God's faithfulness and helping him face vocational demands with renewed strength. R2 echoed this sentiment, stating simply, *"Yes, I feel calmer and at peace."* While brief, his response affirms the affective fruit of Adoration—peace that arises not from changing external circumstances but from an encounter with God in the stillness.

Another theme that emerged strongly is that silence provides strength to face vocational struggles. For seminarians in formation, challenges related to discernment, responsibility, and self-doubt are part of the journey. In silence, they find renewed resolve to persevere. R3 expressed this clearly: *"Yes, I feel that meeting with God gives me strength to face the struggles of my vocation."* The silence does not eliminate the difficulty, but it equips him to endure and trust in God's guidance through the challenges.

In addition to personal resilience, several seminarians noted that silence has a positive effect on their interpersonal relationships. The interior clarity they receive spills over into the way they interact with others in community life. R3 noted, *"I also find it easier to cultivate a positive atmosphere in building relationships with community members."* This suggests that silence is not a withdrawal from others, but rather a deepening of presence that enhances one's relational maturity. The fruit of silence is not only felt personally but also expressed in kindness, attentiveness, and improved community dynamics.

Closely related to this is the theme of emotional regulation and maturity. In the silence of Adoration, seminarians are invited to observe their emotional reactions, let go of negativity, and respond with greater self-awareness. R4 remarked, *"Yes, I can be more composed when facing problems, not controlled by negative emotions."* His words reflect how silence functions as a formational space for learning how to manage emotions constructively. Rather than reacting impulsively, he gains the inner space to choose his responses wisely, even in stressful or conflictual situations.

Among the most comprehensive reflections came from R5, who described multiple layers of change brought about by Adoration. For him, silence fosters spiritual clarity, humility, and reorientation toward what truly matters. He shared, *"Yes, I feel a significant change in myself every time I enter into silence during Adoration. The most noticeable change is inner peace and mental clarity. Problems or worries that initially felt heavy gradually become lighter because I believe that God will help me."* His testimony illustrates how silence does not merely bring relief, but also trust—allowing him to let go of the need to control and instead rest in God's providence. R5 continued, *"I also feel closer to God, more aware of His immense love,*

and more capable of being patient and humble.” The fruits of Adoration extend into the realm of virtue formation, nurturing qualities essential for priestly life. He concluded, *“Silence helps me manage emotions, overcome restlessness, and direct my focus toward what is truly important in life.”* This highlights the role of silence as a spiritual compass—helping the seminarian to sift through distractions and stay rooted in his core values and calling.

In conclusion, silence in Eucharistic Adoration emerges from these reflections as a powerful and formative space, not only for prayer but for personal transformation. It enables the seminarians to experience God’s peace, deepen their vocational commitment, grow in emotional maturity, improve their relationships, and cultivate interior freedom. Far from being a passive or static moment, silence becomes the ground where God works silently yet profoundly—healing, strengthening, and reshaping the heart of future priests.

Silence as Sanctuary: Managing Stress through Eucharistic Adoration

Silence in Eucharistic Adoration plays a profound role in helping seminarians manage stress and emotional pressure. For many of them, the experience of being still before the Blessed Sacrament becomes a sacred space where inner tension is processed, emotions are calmed, and spiritual strength is renewed. Rather than functioning as passive escape, silence becomes an active and transformative encounter with God.

One common theme that emerged from the interviews is that silence allows the seminarians to process internal pressure. In a world marked by speed and superficiality, R1 shared how the silence of Adoration serves as a healing counterbalance: *“The fast and banal rhythm of life often causes people to feel pressured. In the silence of the Adoration space, I am helped to process that pressure.”* He added, *“Because in the silence of Adoration, I can feel God’s presence and express the contents of my heart to Him.”* For R1, silence is not just rest; it is a moment of communion and emotional release—a space where the heart speaks honestly to God.

Several respondents also noted that silence helps them calm their minds and reorient themselves in the midst of stress. R2 described this briefly yet clearly: *“Stress or pressure makes one feel restless. The silent situation helps to calm and reconcile myself with the problems at hand.”* In a similar vein, R4 reflected on how silence helps him deal with the demands of community life and academic responsibilities: *“I feel pressure when there are many responsibilities at school or in the community. Also, when I experience conflict with community members. Silence in Adoration helps me to have a calmer and more open heart in facing pressures or problems.”* For them, silence is not disengagement from life’s challenges but a return to inner stillness that enables clarity and patience.

In some cases, silence leads to deeper emotional and spiritual transformation. R3 expressed how contemplating his problems before the Blessed Sacrament helped him to move beyond negative emotions: *“When I feel pressured or stressed, I often imagine and contemplate the problem before the Blessed Sacrament. Then feelings of anger or despair seem to disappear and are replaced with optimism and trust in the guidance of the Holy Spirit.”* His experience

illustrates that silence creates a contemplative space where emotions are not suppressed but purified, making room for renewed hope and confidence.

Perhaps the most vivid testimony came from R5, who described silence as a “refuge”—a sacred shelter in times of distress. He shared, *“Silence in Adoration is like a place of refuge for me in the midst of life’s pressures. At first, I might still feel restless or distracted. But the longer I remain, the more I feel that the burden is ‘taken’ by God.”* For R5, silence becomes not only a space of peace but also a school of surrender. He added, *“Silence teaches me to pause, to breathe, and to entrust everything to God. As a result, I not only feel calmer, but also stronger in facing challenges.”*

In summary, the seminarians’ experiences show that silence in Eucharistic Adoration is far from an empty or static moment. It is a living encounter—a dynamic space where burdens are named, emotions are regulated, and hearts are opened to God's quiet yet powerful presence. In silence, they rediscover trust, regain focus, and are spiritually fortified to meet the challenges of their vocation with clarity and resilience.

Memorable Experiences During the Moment of Silence in Adoration

The seminarians’ responses reveal that moments of silence during Eucharistic Adoration are not only prayerful experiences but profound encounters that leave lasting spiritual impact. These moments often occur during personal crises, emotional struggles, or vocational uncertainties, and become occasions where God reveals Himself in unexpected ways. The testimonies reveal several significant themes: encountering God in inner turmoil, receiving emotional healing, growing in self-awareness, and gaining clarity in discernment.

One of the most prominent themes is the experience of encountering God in the midst of inner emptiness or spiritual desolation. R1 recalled a moment of deep struggle where he felt distant from God and overwhelmed by the noise of daily life and spiritual dryness: *“I felt unable to make sense of the dynamics of my vocational journey and my prayer life, which seemed to flow aimlessly. The ongoing noise made it worse, and I felt God was becoming distant from me.”* Yet, in that very space of emptiness, silence became a doorway to peace: *“I tried to find silence in Adoration, and there God gave me calm and assurance that He always accompanies me.”* This experience highlights how God often meets the soul not in clarity, but in vulnerability, transforming confusion into quiet confidence.

Another theme is the healing of emotional stress and anxiety through the gentle presence of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament. R2 shared a powerful moment that took place during a period of communal conflict and academic pressure: *“I was stressed and under pressure due to assignments and conflict with a community member. During the silence, I simply meditated while gazing at the monstrance. It was as if a radiant aura absorbed into me, inviting me to be still while realizing God's presence.”* The silence did not eliminate the problems but allowed him to process and release the stress, experiencing what he described as a tangible sense of divine consolation.

Silence also serves as a space for confronting personal conflicts and finding clarity through inner reflection. R4 described a painful experience of misunderstanding with a formator, which initially led to resentment and frustration: *“I felt upset and annoyed with one of the formators who rebuked me, even though he wouldn’t listen to my point of view. Negative thoughts about him arose in me.”* In Adoration, however, instead of avoiding the issue, he brought it into silence. *“I was reluctant to reflect on the conflict, but in the silence, I felt God made me realize that I was relying too much on emotion and failing to see the good intentions behind the formator’s words.”* This testimony illustrates how silence can bring moral insight and inner conversion, even when the heart resists at first.

Other respondents emphasized the grace of spiritual reassurance and discernment that comes through simply being still before God. R5 recalled a moment of deep confusion as he faced an important life decision: *“I came to Adoration with a heart full of doubt and anxiety. During the silence, I sat quietly before God. There was no direct answer, but peace slowly filled my heart. I felt as if God was whispering, ‘Trust me. I am with you. Your path will become clear in time.’”* That silent encounter, he said, gave him the courage to move forward with faith, even without having all the answers.

Finally, R3 summarized his appreciation for Adoration in a single sentence, calling it *“the most precious moment”*. Although his reflection was brief, it affirms the deep personal value that Adoration holds for him, likely rooted in cumulative experiences of intimacy with God during silent prayer.

In conclusion, these reflections show **that** the silence of Adoration is not emptiness—it is fullness in disguise. In silence, the seminarians confront their deepest struggles, questions, and emotions, and find God present—not always in answers, but in peace, awareness, and strength. The most memorable experiences arise not from extraordinary visions or mystical phenomena, but from the subtle yet transformative presence of Christ who speaks through stillness and gently reorients the heart toward healing, trust, and clarity.

The Importance of Silence in Deepening One’s Relationship with God

Across all testimonies, the seminarians affirmed that silence plays a vital, even irreplaceable, role in deepening their relationship with God. While they acknowledged that God can be encountered in various contexts of daily life, silence was consistently described as a privileged space—a spiritual environment in which the heart opens more fully, the noise of the world fades, and the voice of God becomes clearer. From their responses, several thematic insights can be drawn.

The first theme is that silence offers clarity and interior depth that cannot be found in external noise. R1 emphasized this strongly, stating, *“For me, it is very important. Silence helps a person make life decisions, especially in matters of faith. In silence, we are helped to find answers that come from God.”* He contrasted this with the superficiality of a noisy world: *“In the noise, all we find is shallowness. Crowds turn people into anonymous beings.”* This

statement highlights the idea that true spiritual identity is formed not in external approval but in quiet, personal communion with the divine.

R2 provided a balanced theological view, acknowledging that God is present everywhere and at all times. However, he also asserted that silence functions as a “catalyst” for communion with God: *“Yes, we can encounter God anytime and anywhere. Yet silence is the best situation to pray calmly. Silence is like a catalyst that helps the relationship with God to be realized.”* This reveals that while God's presence is constant, our ability to be fully present to God often requires silence as a condition for attentiveness and surrender.

For R3, the importance of silence lies in its capacity to create an intimate space of trust and expression, akin to that between a child and a parent. He shared, *“I truly realize that silence, when done well, brings a positive impact on my life and vocation. That’s why I often recount all my life experiences in the language of a child speaking to a parent.”* His metaphor portrays silence as a relational space of vulnerability and openness, where the self can be known and loved by God without pretension.

R4’s reflection points to another essential function of silence: awareness of God’s subtle work in daily life. He noted, *“Silence becomes an important means for me to become more aware of how God works through experiences I often don’t recognize.”* This insight echoes a contemplative spirituality that sees God’s presence not only in the extraordinary but in the unnoticed and routine moments, which are only revealed when one pauses and listens.

Finally, R5 offered a rich, integrated view of silence as the most intimate setting for divine encounter. He explained, *“For me, silence is one of the best ways to deepen my relationship with God. Amid the busyness and noise of everyday life, silence becomes the most intimate moment to meet God.”* He continued, *“In silence, I feel God is easier to ‘hear’ because there are no external distractions. I become more sensitive to His presence, more aware of His love, and more able to feel His guidance.”* He concluded by noting, *“My relationship with God becomes more personal and deep because I learn to listen, not just speak.”* His words express a mature spirituality where listening becomes the doorway to intimacy, and silence becomes the school of love.

In conclusion, the seminarians’ reflections affirm that silence is not only helpful but essential for cultivating a deep, personal relationship with God. It serves as a sacred context where distractions fall away, the heart becomes vulnerable, and God becomes more accessible—not through dramatic revelation, but through the quiet unfolding of presence, love, and guidance. In silence, they do not merely speak to God; they learn to listen—and in that listening, they find communion.

The Influence of Silence in Adoration on Vocational Discernment

The responses from the seminarians clearly indicate that silence in Eucharistic Adoration plays a formative and illuminating role in vocational reflection. Across all testimonies, silence is not merely a passive experience but a vital space where they come to better understand God’s calling in their lives. Several key themes emerge from their reflections: silence as divine

companionship in the journey, as a catalyst for inner reflection, and as a source of clarity and affirmation in discernment.

The first theme is that silence is experienced as a shared moment with God, the source of one's vocation. R1 articulated this directly: *"Yes, absolutely. Because the silence that happens is a silence shared with God, who is the source of life and the direction of my vocation."* For him, silence is not isolation, but communion with the One who calls, providing a sacred context in which the purpose of his life becomes clearer through God's quiet companionship.

R2 and R3 affirmed this impact succinctly. R2 answered simply, *"Yes,"* while R3 emphasized, *"Yes, it strongly influences me."* Though brief, these responses suggest that the role of silence in their vocational discernment is both significant and undeniable, reinforcing that adoration provides a consistent space for vocational awareness to grow.

For R4, silence functions as a means to reflect more intentionally on lived experiences, especially those that shape his sense of calling. He noted, *"This is one among many other activities. Through time spent in silence before the Blessed Sacrament, I can better reflect on both painful and joyful experiences in the dynamics of vocational life."* His reflection points to silence as an integrative practice—one that allows him to connect emotions, experiences, and God's presence in a unified narrative of vocation.

R5 offered the most detailed reflection, emphasizing that silence significantly shapes how he discerns God's will for his life. He shared, *"Yes, silence in Adoration greatly influences how I reflect on my life's vocation. In silence, I feel closer to God, and this helps me understand the direction He wants for my life."* He described how silence becomes especially crucial in moments of discernment and uncertainty: *"When I struggle with my vocation—whether in religious life, work, or ministry—silence becomes a time to ask for God's guidance and to listen to Him."* He further observed, *"This moment often gives me the clarity or strength I need to move forward."* His testimony illustrates that silence is both a space for questioning and a space for receiving—where uncertainty is met with divine clarity.

In conclusion, the seminarians' reflections affirm that silence in Adoration is a deeply influential part of their vocational journey. It enables them to pause, listen, process experiences, and reconnect with God's voice amid life's many demands. Whether in brief realizations or profound moments of clarity, silence allows their vocation to unfold not as a theoretical concept, but as a relational path walked in communion with Christ present in the Eucharist.

Silence in Adoration as a Source of Inspiration and Solution in Difficult Situations

The seminarians consistently affirmed that silence in Eucharistic Adoration becomes a meaningful space for finding peace, clarity, and even solutions in times of personal difficulty. While not always providing immediate or explicit answers, silence functions as a spiritual environment where inspiration emerges, emotional burdens are lifted, and inner guidance unfolds. From their reflections, several thematic patterns emerge: silence as emotional restoration, as a space for inner listening and reflection, and as a channel for divine clarity through subtle inspiration.

First, silence in Adoration is experienced as a restorative encounter that reorients the heart in moments of difficulty. R1 shared that, *“Of course, in many situations, the silence of Adoration restores me—affirming that God always accompanies me.”* This indicates that, for him, the solution lies not in external answers but in the recovery of trust and awareness of divine presence. When God is felt as close, he is better equipped to face problems with a renewed spirit.

A similar experience was described by R2, who stated, *“Yes. Through reflection, I feel that I am loved by God.”* Although brief, this insight reflects that in silence, the seminarian is not necessarily looking for intellectual answers, but for an existential re-grounding in divine love—a reassurance that becomes the foundation for resilience.

For others, silence initiates a process of discernment, beginning with interior stillness and continuing into deeper reflection and conversation. R3 expressed this clearly: *“Silence is the first solution when I’m facing difficulties. Then I continue with written reflection and sharing with friends and my spiritual director.”* This response illustrates a holistic model of discernment, in which silence serves as the starting point—a way to calm the inner storm and prepare the heart to listen more clearly before articulating or acting.

R4 offered a more nuanced reflection, admitting the tension between distraction and inspiration. He shared, *“Yes. I don’t fully understand it yet, but several times during Adoration I’ve received inspirations that opened my mind in facing difficulties.”* However, he also confessed, *“There have been times when it was hard to be silent because the problems I was thinking about distracted me and kept me from focusing in Adoration.”* His honesty reveals the real struggle of entering silence during inner turmoil, yet also suggests that even imperfect silence can allow grace to break through in unexpected moments.

R5 gave the most detailed account, affirming that silence in Adoration often brings inspiration not as a direct answer, but through a shift in perception. He explained, *“Yes, often silence in Adoration gives me solutions or inspiration when facing difficult situations. It doesn’t always come as a direct answer, but through a sense of peace that arises in my heart.”* He added, *“When I sit quietly before the Lord, my mind becomes clearer, and I can see the problem from a new perspective.”* He also mentioned how scripture or spontaneous prayer during Adoration can become vehicles of divine inspiration: *“Sometimes God gives inspiration through His Word that I read, or through prayerful thoughts that arise in my mind. In the silence, I feel as though God is guiding me toward the path I should take.”*

In conclusion, the seminarians’ experiences show that silence in Adoration does not always offer immediate solutions, but it creates the interior space necessary for divine inspiration and emotional clarity to emerge. Whether through the quiet affirmation of God’s love, the calming of the heart, or the gentle illumination of a new perspective, silence becomes a source of grace amid struggle. In difficult times, it is not the absence of sound but the presence of God in that silence that makes all the difference.

The Role of Silence in Self-Reflection and Introspection

The seminarians consistently affirmed that silence is an essential space for genuine self-reflection and introspection, allowing them to look inward with honesty and openness before God. Their responses reveal that silence fosters self-awareness, facilitates transformation, and encourages a deeper understanding of one's actions, motivations, and relationship with God. Several thematic patterns emerge from their reflections.

A key theme is that silence creates a sacred space for interior encounter—both with oneself and with God. R1 explained this well: *“Silence urges us to enter within ourselves and recognize the dynamics of the journey that has happened and is yet to come. Silence becomes a moment of encounter with myself and with God.”* This suggests that silence is not a withdrawal from reality, but an entry into a deeper one—where one's personal story is brought into dialogue with God's ongoing presence.

R2 highlighted the exclusive and intimate nature of this interior dialogue, noting: *“When I'm silent, I'm no longer speaking to others. I am in a space where only God and I exist. That's the moment when I can dialogue with myself, accompanied by God.”* In this testimony, silence becomes a spiritual atmosphere where superficial distractions fall away, enabling authentic inner dialogue and divine companionship.

The role of silence in personal transformation and alignment with God's will was emphasized by R3, who said, *“Yes, I believe silence is the path that must be taken to meet God, so that one's life can be transformed or lived according to His will.”* For him, silence is not only for knowing the self but for allowing that knowledge to be shaped by divine truth, leading to a life more fully conformed to God.

R4 focused on how silence allows for moral evaluation and self-correction, particularly in relation to daily responsibilities and interpersonal relationships: *“Silence also becomes the moment to look at my experiences. I can reflect and introspect on the shortcomings and mistakes I've made—whether in my daily tasks or in my relationships with others.”* His reflection points to silence as a mirror for personal accountability, where the conscience is awakened in a spirit of humility.

R5 offered the most comprehensive reflection, describing silence as *“an ideal condition for self-reflection and introspection.”* He shared, *“In silence, I can ‘pause’ from my busy routine and truly look into myself. I can evaluate my attitudes, actions, and choices.”* He continued, *“Silence helps me recognize my weaknesses, mistakes, and areas needing improvement, but it also reminds me of God's blessings and grace in my life.”* This balance—between awareness of sin and remembrance of grace—demonstrates a mature understanding of introspection as not merely self-criticism but as a path toward renewal. He concluded, *“Through deep self-reflection, I feel more ready to grow into a better person and become closer to God.”*

In summary, the seminarians' responses show that silence is not simply the absence of noise, but the condition in which truth can emerge—truth about oneself, one's relationship with others, and one's connection to God. It allows for honest self-examination, opens the heart to

grace, and fosters an inner transformation grounded in love. In silence, the seminarians not only see themselves more clearly, but also receive the courage to change and the faith to walk more closely with the God who sees them fully.

The Theology of Silence Among Seminarians: A Sacred Space of Encounter, Discernment, and Transformation

In the context of priestly formation, silence is not merely the absence of sound, but a sacred dynamic that opens the human heart to encounter the living God. Within Eucharistic Adoration, silence takes on a particular theological significance. It becomes a space of grace—an atmosphere saturated with divine presence, where the heart listens more than speaks, and the soul enters into communion with Christ truly present in the Blessed Sacrament. For seminarians, this silence is experienced not as emptiness, but as fullness: a place where God draws near, and the self is revealed in its most honest form.

Silence before the Eucharist becomes a privileged locus for discerning one's vocation. In the stillness, seminarians are invited to set aside distractions and attune their hearts to the gentle promptings of the Spirit. This silent encounter enables them to recognize that their calling is not merely a personal ambition, but a divine initiative to be welcomed and trusted. In moments of uncertainty, struggle, or anxiety, silence becomes the context where clarity unfolds gradually—not always through direct answers, but through peace, confidence, and the rediscovery of God's unwavering accompaniment. Through silence, seminarians learn that vocation is discerned not primarily through effort, but through listening.

Moreover, silence becomes a space of deep interior transformation. In Adoration, seminarians enter a sacred threshold where grace works gently but powerfully. Here, emotional burdens are lifted, the mind is quieted, and the heart is reordered. Silence provides the environment where wounds are acknowledged and healed, where fears are named and surrendered, and where strength is drawn from the simplicity of being in God's presence. The transformation that unfolds in this silence is not spectacular, but real: a steady formation into men of peace, depth, and prayerful maturity.

Integral to this process is the role of silence in fostering self-knowledge. In a culture dominated by external noise, silence offers the rare opportunity to encounter one's inner reality in the light of God's mercy. It becomes a mirror that reflects both personal brokenness and divine love. In this introspective space, seminarians are led to examine their attitudes, decisions, and relationships—not with condemnation, but with the hope of renewal. Silence becomes the language of humility and conversion, nurturing in them the desire to grow, to repent, and to walk more freely in the truth of their identity as sons of the Father.

Furthermore, the practice of silence cultivates a contemplative disposition essential for priestly life. It trains the seminarians to be present: to God, to themselves, and to the people they are called to serve. In silence, they develop the capacity to listen deeply—an indispensable skill for spiritual direction, preaching, pastoral accompaniment, and communal leadership.

Silence teaches them that ministry flows not from activism, but from adoration; not from anxiety, but from abiding. It forms the rhythm of a priestly life rooted in being before doing.

In essence, the theology of silence that emerges from the seminarians' experience is not accidental—it is constitutive of Christian formation. Silence in Eucharistic Adoration is a space of encounter, discernment, transformation, healing, and spiritual alignment. It is where identity is deepened, mission is clarified, and grace becomes tangible. It is a contemplative foundation upon which the interior life is built, and from which authentic priestly ministry will one day emerge.

CONCLUSION

The theology of silence among seminarians, as revealed through their lived experiences in Eucharistic Adoration, points to silence as a profound and essential dimension of spiritual formation. It is within this sacred stillness that seminarians encounter the real presence of Christ, discern the direction of their vocation, and allow themselves to be interiorly transformed by grace. Silence becomes not only a space of prayer, but a sanctuary of healing, clarity, and communion—where God speaks not through noise, but through presence.

In the rhythm of contemplative silence, seminarians learn to integrate their emotions, confront their limitations, and discover the enduring companionship of God in both consolation and desolation. This spiritual discipline nurtures a pastoral identity rooted in listening rather than reacting, in surrender rather than control. Through silence, they are formed into ministers who are not only capable of speaking about God, but who have first learned to dwell with Him.

Ultimately, silence in Eucharistic Adoration is revealed not as absence, but as sacred fullness—a space where divine love is received, vocation is deepened, and the soul is configured ever more closely to Christ. In a world saturated with noise, this theology of silence invites the Church to rediscover the transformative power of quiet presence, and the enduring truth that in silence, God still speaks.

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