



BONUS: The Quiet Collection 2022!

I'm Emily P. Freeman, and welcome to the Next Right Thing. This is a podcast about making decisions, but also about making a life if you struggle with decision fatigue, chronic hesitation, or if you just need a few minutes away from the constant stream of information and the sometimes delightful, but also distracting hum of entertainment, you're in the right place for discerning your next right thing.

Today's episode is a special one because we have a surprise for you, and it's finally time to share it. Listen in.

As you may know, it's been five years since we've been offering a reflective audio devotional for Christmas time. Over the years, we've had tens of thousands of people purchase the collection for themselves or as gifts for teachers, small groups, family members, book clubs, neighbors, faith leaders. The list goes on. Now, the very first time I created the Christmas collection was back in 2017. I created it one time and thought that would be it, but then the next year I decided to offer it again, and I offered it again the next year. For three years, we offered the same audio collection for Christmas. At that time, I think it was maybe a two-week thing, and people enjoyed it and they bought it once and they could keep it forever.

Well, then came 2020, and for all the reasons you already know, I felt like we needed a reflection on the Christmas story that was informed by the current state of the world at that time. Well, since then, I felt that way every year, and so I've written a new 10-day reflection series every year since 2020. The 2022 Collection is ready for you now, but here's the big news. The Quiet Collection was never meant to be just for Christmas. I've always had a big vision to create audio reflections for various seasons and stages of life. Christmas, yes, but also Easter, back to school, milestone moments, ordinary time. But we've been limited by delivery methods, which has kept us from being able to create multiple collections per year.

The Christmas collection, well, it takes months of work to set up. We offer it every December, but we start working on it back in August, sometimes even before that. And so as much as I would love to be able to offer multiple collections every year, I'm limited by time. As each year passes, we work hard to make the delivery of the Christmas collection more streamlined, automated, and user-friendly. Well, last spring, we decided that it was time to take that multiple audio collection idea that I've had for literally years and finally make it a reality. I didn't want to be limited anymore by the technology and the functionality that kept us only being able to offer one collection a year.

And so the solution, well, it was time to create an app. A place to house, not only the Christmas collection every year, but also many audio collections for various seasons and stages of life. It's a big vision. It's one that will take time to build, but the building has started and we're at phase one, and today, I finally get to tell you about it. Long story short, y'all, we have an app. It is not perfect, and the current version,

I am sorry to say at this moment only works for iOS devices. I know it's the worst, but also the best. We will get there for Android, I promise you that. But if you have an iPhone, you can download the Quiet Collection app for free from the App Store right this minute.

Now, once you do that inside the app, you can purchase this year's Christmas collection right there. Now, if you don't have an iPhone, but you still want to purchase the Christmas collection, you absolutely still can. In the show notes of the episode, there's a clear link to download the app for iPhone. But like I said, if you don't have an iPhone, a link to purchase the Christmas collection via the web the same way we've always done it every year is still available for you. So now we've got options. The other thing I'll say, if you want to gift the collection this year, there's also a website for you to do that as well. It's all in the show notes. I hope desperately that it makes sense.

Is this a perfect announcement? No. Do I wish we had the app completely ready for all users and set up for gifting within the app? Yes, I do. That was the plan, but wires and technology and timing just didn't quite work on our side this year, but I didn't want to hold the app back, so it's a partial solution, but I'll take it.

In summary, the Quiet Collection is now an app available for iPhone, a place to house not only the Christmas collection for 2022, but future audio collections as well. We're starting with the Christmas collection inside the app and a couple other fun freebies that you'll see when you get there. But looking ahead into 2023 and beyond, I really look forward to creating more collections for you to enjoy and to accompany you along your way.

Well, in closing, I wanted to leave you with the welcome message that you will hear as soon as you download the Quiet Collection. I feel like why repeat a thing I've already said once. So we're going to play that for you here in the episode by way of maybe a little bit of a teaser of what to expect inside the Quiet Collection. I hope you love it as much as I do. I hope that it serves you as you go along your way and just know we are working hard behind the scenes to make it so that the app is available for all users and not just iPhone users. So that is soon to come, but for now, I'm going to close out this episode with that welcome message from The Quiet Collection.

Hi there, I'm Emily. Welcome to The Quiet Collection. Our lives are always circling around love and loneliness, lost and foundness, division and connection, faith and questions and confusion, discovery and joy, all along the way. Beneath circumstance and schedule, there runs a quiet current, the essence of our inner life. Our soul is the animating center of our choices and our personhood, the invisible place from which we live, move and discern. Giving space for the care of the soul is where my own heart beats strong. All of my work takes place where creativity, contemplation, and faith, converge.

Writer, speaker, and activist, Parker Palmer gives us a compelling metaphor for the soul, submitting that the soul is like a wild animal, both resilient and shy. If we want to see a wild animal, Palmer writes, the last thing we should do is go crashing through the woods, shouting for the creature to come out. But if we are willing to walk quietly into the woods and sit silently for an hour or two at the base of a tree, the creature we're waiting for may well emerge. I'm always working to find new ways to take what is true and sometimes invisible and bringing it into our everyday walking around regular, extravagant, and ordinary lives. And so that's part of what we're attempting to do here with this app, to create some intentional space for your soul to emerge, to give it form and margin by offering simple readings, familiar prayers and original reflections to accompany you along your way.

There are primarily two main sections of the Quiet Collection, borrowed prayers and the collections themselves. The borrowed prayers are always available for anyone as soon as you download the app. What do I mean by borrowed prayers? Well, we've been told not to borrow trouble and to be careful borrowing money, but sometimes borrowing is not only okay, but welcome and invited when uncertainty permeates

the moment, whether because of a devastating national or personal tragedy or you're in a season of waiting or doubt, a regular practice of praying familiar words could serve as a comfort and even be considered a radical act of faith.

And so in the borrowed prayers, you'll find words others have written, many of them ancient prayers recited and repeated by people through history. The Welcoming Prayer by Father Thomas Keating, selections from the Prayer of St. Patrick and the Prayer of St. Francis, just to name a few. These recorded borrowed prayers will always be free, and the list will grow over time. The second main section are the collections themselves. You may already be familiar with The Quiet Collection for Christmas. That's the 10-day reflective audio series I create every year that's rooted in and informed by the story of the incarnation of Christ. This is a collection you can purchase for yourself or gift to someone else right here in the app during a designated window of time.

But this was never meant to be the only collection. Now with the creation of this app, we finally have a way to offer more collections over time for various seasons of the year and stages of life. We're grateful to finally have a permanent home for the Christmas collection and to have an accessible framework for other collections to follow.

Finally, a word about audio. As the daughter of a radio broadcaster, this medium is in my bones. I'm compelled by the way listening engages our heart, our mind, and our imagination in a different way than reading does and in a gentler way than video does. Language is processed differently when we hear it as compared to when we read it. Having said that, each prayer, reading, and reflection available in this app will always be accompanied by a transcript if you prefer reading to listening or if listening is not accessible for you. With these simple, quiet offerings, I hope to make it easy for you to take along the way with you and to return to as part of your daily or weekly routines. There won't ever be glitz or glitter here, just quiet offerings for your own reflection, both personally and communally.

So as we begin together, I hope to offer some companionship to hold space for you as you consider the changing landscape of your inner life because if you're a person, the landscape of your inner life is always changing. However, you discovered us, I'm glad you're here, and you're welcome. Whether you consider yourself to be a person of faith, whether your beliefs are deeply rooted or recently uprooted, whether you closely identify with a particular Christian tradition or if you're just spiritually curious, I hope you'll find welcome here. May the quiet surround and encourage you, and may grace surprise you kindly along the way. Welcome to The Quiet Collection.