**Introduction: Coming to Quiet**

So often when we gather as a staff community, a leadership team, a group of colleagues, our focus is on the children and young adults in our care. The agenda before us may shape the community we are creating together, and the educational experiences that engage the students in their learning. For this we need to be really present. Each person’s wisdom and experience can contribute to shaping the future. A quiet focussed introduction to a staff meeting can be an invitation to be really present to each other and to the agenda. Such presence can lead to a fruitful meeting.

The reflections that follow are to invite such attentive presence. Let this poem invite us to enter into the silence for others, those students who are entrusted to our care, and our colleagues with whom we share this responsibility.

**THE EMBRACE OF SILENCE**

***The silence gathers us***

 ***and we are one***

There comes the time

the waking of our awareness

when we enter into the silence for others

for those so traumatised, tortured, desperate

depressed, lonely, spent…

there seems no way.

We enter into the silence

and take them with us

wherever they be

hold them tenderly there

resting in her arms

knowing what silence and touch

mean to us

the healing they have wrought

the life they have opened out

the grace they gift

we desire earnestly for all.

When we enter into the silence for others

the silence takes us to her heart

and into the awareness of Francis and Clare

that all of life is sister, brother, lover.

Noel Davis

 *– The Heart Waking*

May the reflections encourage you to enter silence, a silence that speaks, reveals….