

## **The Vow of Celibacy and the Healing Power of Vows**

Throughout history, saints, mystics, and seekers of truth have entered into vows as a way of creating sacred refuge from the turmoil of the world. Vows are not about denial for its own sake, but about cultivating a deeper union with God, Spirit, and the self. They provide a framework for healing, grounding, and re-centering in a life that can otherwise become overwhelmed by noise, attachment, and distraction.

Among the most profound of these commitments is the vow of celibacy. It is not merely a renunciation of physical intimacy, but a sacred redirection of energy—body, heart, and spirit—toward divine presence. Celibacy, when chosen freely, allows the seeker to conserve their life force and to nourish a clear channel between soul and Spirit. It is not a rejection of love, but a sanctification of love in its purest, most expansive form.

Vows often come in sets, shaping a rhythm of life. The vow of solitude reminds us that silence and stillness are holy teachers. The vow of sobriety clears the mind and heart of clouded judgment. The vow of periodic silence gives space for the Spirit to speak where words cannot. Each vow is a discipline, yes, but more importantly it is a gift—a sanctuary built within ourselves.

Even a few years of living under vows can reshape the soul in lasting ways. A time of discipline, prayer, and intentional self-preservation can restore one's light after years of struggle, heartbreak, or trauma. Monastery life offers this structure in community, yet it can also be carried within us—taken wherever our journeys lead. In this way, the monastery becomes not just a place, but a living rhythm of life.

For Cowdrey, the journey into vows deepened around 2019, when the weight of the world's harms became too heavy to carry without creating sacred boundaries. In the beginning, the vows were difficult—a wrestling with self, memory, and external experiences. But in time, the vows became less of a burden and more of a blessing, a guiding path toward freedom. Now, after many years of vows, the fruits of the vows are visible: peace where there was once turmoil, strength where there was once vulnerability, and light where there was once shadow.

This path has become a great triumph—personally liberating and deeply affirming. It feels wonderful not only to stand firm in these vows, but also to know she is never alone. With her angel guardians by her side, Cowdrey walks with strength and joy, upheld by divine companionship.

The vow of celibacy, like all vows, is not meant to cut us off from life, but to draw us closer to it. It helps us preserve what is most precious—our energy, our dignity, our spirit—so that we may heal, grow, and shine in the fullness of God's design.