

Scripture Reading - A Reading from the Gospel according to Matthew (*Matthew 11:28*)

Jesus says, "I will give you rest."

Jesus says, "Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest." The Gospel of the Lord. R. Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ.

Reflection – Real Peace and Rest from the Lord

Rest, a gift from God. A substantial portion of our day is taken up by rest and sleep. Everyone knows how necessary rest and sleep are after having been deprived of it for even just one night. The human body needs to rest in order to function properly. God expects us to rest. Rest is His gift to us. In this work-oriented society we are in danger of spending too much time on work and becoming a slave to it. Whilst God does not tire, God Himself takes the lead by resting on the seventh day after His work of Creation. We are supposed to feel refreshed after our night's sleep. However, there are many people who suffer from insomnia, restive sleep or wake up feeling more tired and depressed. The question is: does the rest we take really quieten and calm our entire being – body, mind and soul?

Rest for our minds and souls. In the course of the day, we come across obstacles, trials and difficulties in our work, in our homes, in our relationships. We lost our patience, let our anger take over us and then felt guilty afterwards. Or we may suppress our anger but afterwards feel frustrated and like a boiling kettle about to blow its top. Invariably all these trying situations cause tensions and anxieties in our minds. A good night's sleep will not completely take away the tensions that have arisen. Stress, tensions and anxieties tire our minds and hearts. The inner core of our being, our soul is another aspect of our being that requires rest. A person who harbours hatred and unforgiveness will never find true inner peace. Only in a soul where sin has been overcome is there true and lasting peace – the peace of Jesus Christ that the world cannot give. Sin and guilt tire our soul and deprive it of its peace.

Real Rest. We could never feel rested if our minds are wearied by stress, tensions, anxieties or fears. Or if our hearts and souls are troubled by inner rages of hatred or unforgiveness or weighted down by sin and guilt. It is only when all fears and anxieties are removed from our minds, and our hearts and souls freed from the burden of sin and guilt, that our physical bodies can relax and feel really rested.

Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Obviously the Lord knows what our needs are. By "wearied and burdened" the Lord is referring more especially to the weight on our minds and hearts and the burden of the sin and guilt in our souls. Only to the Lord can we surrender all our burdens especially the emotional and spiritual. We come into the Lord's Presence, trusting in His love and Providence. We surrender all our problems, difficulties, failures, sadness, disappointments and whatever that burdens and wearies us to Him. We let Him take over without suggesting the methods He should adopt in helping us. We don't suggest to Him the time by which we require the help to be given. We don't give Him deadlines. We trust in Him. We let Him know that whatever outcome He chooses to give us is fine with us. We ask Him to help us forgive the hurts that have wounded us so deeply.

From the Lord in exchange for surrendering all our heavy and wearisome burdens that we cannot shoulder on our own, we receive His peace and calm. Suddenly it seemed some weight has been lifted from our shoulders. The problem may still seem the same but feelings of calm and confidence prevailed and took over. Through the presence of the Lord in Confession, we can be freed of the burden of sin and guilt and be renewed by His sanctifying grace. This wondrous Sacrament can truly give us rest in God as it breaks away all the bondages of sin and guilt that takes away real joy in the Lord. *But I have stilled and quietened my soul; like a weaned child with its mother, like a weaned child is my soul within me. (Psalm 131:2).* Only when we have really rested in the Lord and surrendered all our emotional and spiritual burdens and receive His peace can we, together with the Psalmist say with confidence, "My soul is like a weaned child with its mother."—we rest in the security, love and tenderness of the Lord like a child resting in the arms of its mother.

Conversation with Our Lord

Precious Lord, I bless You with all my soul. You are always there for me whenever I have a problem. Only with You can I really confide and feel trust and confidence. Only You can really understand how much I am in need of Your peace and calm in my heart and soul. Lord I pray that I may never forget that You are always by my side to share my life including all my problems. Grant that it is always to You that I turn whenever I am looking for rest and comfort from my problems. Thank You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus.

"He makes me lie down in green pastures..." Psalms 23:2