

A Licensed Reader writes

Following a long, cold winter and a faltering uncertain spring, summer has arrived. Days are longer, brighter, warmer (*maybe*). There is lush and vibrant growth in our gardens, in the parks and out in the countryside. The shops are filling up with summer berries, social and sporting events are under way. You may be planning a day out, a party or looking forward to a holiday.

It is important and necessary for all of us to have a break, a change of pace. To do something we enjoy doing. To reconnect with ourselves, with those around us, and with God. Periods of rest and recreation lead to restoration and help us to enjoy life as well as giving us time to think and plan ahead. It is good for our physical, mental and psychological well-being. To work with no rest and play leaves us tired and, perhaps, resentful.

St. Augustine said that our hearts are restless until they rest in God. This sounds like a great idea but it often seems we are too busy. In many ways the season after Pentecost calls us to practise resting in God. It is the long green season in which we are to learn and grow in our discipleship.

During this time God is calling us to rest in God's presence, to experience his love, and live our Christian faith in ordinary everyday life. It is a reminder of and a time to acknowledge and experience God's presence and God's faithfulness in the mundane day-to-day stuff of our lives.

Resting in God does not mean that we simply sit around. It does not necessarily mean that we have to give up our daily schedule and tasks though some changes might be in order. Everything we do work, study, play, errands may be considered as prayer in the sense that what we do and who we are connects us to the reality of God. Working, family obligations, household chores, paying the bills, home repairs, going to the doctor, studying, and holidays. The list goes on and on. Our calendar says look at all we have to do. The Church offers us the season after Pentecost and says look at all the opportunities you have to practise resting in God.

Many of the things we have on our calendar and to-do lists are the result of prior relationships and blessings. So maybe we could go through our day with a sense of thanksgiving, for the food we have to cook, the clothes we have to wash, the house we have to repair, for the friends or family we care for, and those who help us. This is, perhaps, the practice of mindfulness and ordinary life becomes our prayer.

During these summer months may we find some time and space for rest and recreation. To be ourselves, to be with our friends and families and to be with God. So, we are refreshed and ready for the work and the ministry that lies ahead.

Michael