

## **Come to Jesus and Find Rest for Your Soul**

Life often teaches us that what first appears to be a disappointment can become God's appointment. With the eyes of faith we discover that God is always at work, even in our struggles. This is the heart of this weekend's gospel. Jesus thanks His Father because the mystery of the kingdom is revealed not to the learned but the humble and childlike. Even in the face of rejection, Jesus remains united to His Father in loving trust by giving thanks.

From that loving relationship comes one of the most beautiful invitations in the Gospel:

*"Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble of heart, and you will find rest for your souls."* (Matthew 11:28–29)

These words speak directly to our lives today. Many people carry heavy burdens: illness, grief, loneliness, financial pressures, family difficulties, addictions, guilt, anxiety, and uncertainty about the future. Others quietly struggle while caring for aging parents, raising children or grandchildren who have drifted from the faith, or coping with the rising cost of living. Though surrounded by the beauty of God's creation, many hearts remain restless.

Jesus does not deny the reality of these struggles. Nor does He promise a life free from suffering. Instead, He offers His presence. He invites us to stop carrying our burdens alone and to place them into His hands. When we insist on solving everything by ourselves, our burdens become heavier. But when we surrender them to Christ in faith, they become His yoke that is easy because He carries it with us.

Dear parishioners think of the traditional farming imagery Jesus listeners' would know. A young ox was yoked beside a stronger experienced one. The stronger animal carried most of the weight while the younger one learned by walking alongside it. This is exactly what Jesus does for us. He never asks us to walk alone. He walks beside us, strengthening us, guiding us, and carrying the greater part of the load. We still have our responsibilities, but we are no longer alone.

The world offers many false forms of rest through wealth, pleasure, endless entertainment, power, and material success. Yet these promises often leave people more exhausted than before. True peace cannot be found in possessions or achievements but only in Christ, whose gentle and humble heart alone satisfies the deepest longing of the human soul.

Reflecting on the words of St. Augustine, Pope Benedict XVI beautifully observed *"The restless heart, echoing St. Augustine, is the heart that is ultimately satisfied with nothing less than God. Our heart is restless for God... But not only are we restless for God; God's heart is restless for us."*

How consoling it is to know that while we search for God, He is already searching for us. His invitation remains unchanged: **"Come to me."**

The question each of us should ask is simple: **What burden do I need to surrender to Jesus today? The invitation is still open to us.**

We find His rest by making time each day for prayer, especially before the Blessed Sacrament, by faithfully participating in Sunday Mass, celebrating the Sacrament of Reconciliation, cultivating gratitude, and replacing anxiety with trust in God's providence. We also experience Christ's peace by forgiving others, serving those in need, visiting the sick and lonely, encouraging those who are discouraged, and becoming active members of our parish community.

Our world is weary and longs for hope. As Disciples of Christ, we are called not only to receive His peace but also to share it. Every act of kindness, every compassionate listener, every peacemaking, every volunteering, and every forgiving heart becomes a living witness to the gentle and humble Heart of Jesus.

May each of us hear anew Christ's loving invitation this week. Let us come to Him with confidence, surrender our burdens into His hands, learn from His gentle and humble Heart, and discover the refreshing peace and lasting rest that only He can give. Then, renewed by His grace, may we become instruments of that same peace for our families, our parish, and everyone we meet.