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OUR PIUS UPDATE
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What if Jesus is inviting me to “come away” —
to bring my heart in synch with Jesus’ heart?
Can I just slow down and rest...
letting Jesus take the lead?





OPEN TO HEAR GOD'S WORD

In the baptismal ceremony, there is an optional prayer called the "*Ephphatha*" prayer.

With it, the celebrant touches the ears and mouth of those being baptized and prays that they may soon hear God's word and proclaim the faith that comes from hearing. In a world filled with distractions and noise, it is more and more difficult to listen attentively to God's word. Jesus is the **Word**, God's perfect communication. If we want to know Jesus better and follow him in our daily lives, we have to meet him regularly in the Gospels.

It's been said that the average Christian spends more time in one evening watching television (or using the internet and social media) than the entire rest of the week reading the Bible. Do I devote as much time to hearing God's word as I do to hearing the voices of the world?

—Fr. Jim Kubicki, SJ, is a member of the Midwest Province and director of St. Francis Mission on the Rosebud Reservation in South Dakota.

PRAYER

*May the Lord Jesus,
who made the deaf to hear and the mute to speak,
grant that I may always receive his word with my ears
and profess the faith with my lips,
to the glory and praise of God the Father.*

—adapted from the *Ephphatha* prayer

SOURCE: www.JesuitPrayer.org



PLACING MY TO DO LIST IN GOD'S HANDS



I was lying in bed this morning thinking (honestly dreading) all the things I had on my **to-do** list. There is work to do with my father's estate, and many of those projects have multiple steps. My health insurance is up for yearly review, which is another time-consuming task. Also, I feel like school shopping may never end!

As I began to feel overwhelmed by the world, and it's demands, I was reminded of the Lord's promise to all of us, in **Matthew 11:28-30**, where Jesus says,

"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 meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest for yourselves. For my yoke is easy, and my burden light."

Does He really mean it? Does He mean I can give Him **ALL** my burdens, even the seemingly silly ones like back to school shopping? **St. Edith Stein** has a beautiful quote which I think answers the questions of our heart.

"God is there in these moments of rest and can give us in a single instant exactly what we need. Then the rest of the day can take its course, under the same effort and strain, perhaps, but in peace. And when night comes, and you look back over the day and see how fragmentary everything has been, and how much you planned that has gone undone, and all the reasons you have to be embarrassed and ashamed: just take everything exactly as it is, put it in God's hands and leave it with Him. Then you will be able to rest in Him — really rest — and start the next day as a new life."

If there is one thing I've learned in my spiritual journey, it's that God is there for me, but I actually have to hand things over to Him. There are so many aspects of my life which I have a death grip over, clinging to fiercely to stay in control of them. So this school year I'm going to recommit (this is a recurring theme in my life) to handing everything over to God, even the messy things, even the ones I want to control, and even my to-do lists.

As I start my day off going over that list in my head, I want to ask God to guide me and show me what He really needs me to do. I want Him to help me avoid the things that don't need to be done, things that are really just obstacles to my peace.

Let's hand our lists over to God! Let's ask Him to guide our paths and lead out efforts.

Who will join me in this? Who will commit to at least trying to remember to hand everything over to God? Let's pray for each other as we start this new school year. No matter if your children are still home with you, in preschool, home-schooled, in traditional school, heading off to college, or have even moved into their own homes, let's hand our lists over to God! Let's ask Him to guide our paths and lead out efforts. Let's remind ourselves that no matter what we have on our to-do list, getting to Heaven needs to be at the top of our list. Let's edit our lists, ensuring everything on them helps us achieve the goal of Heaven. Let's have the courage and strength to trust Him and hand our burdens over to Him.

Jesus, I trust in you. Jesus, I trust in you. Jesus, I trust in you.

SOURCE: Courtney Vallejo, www.catholicmom.com

THOUGHTS ON LABOUR DAY



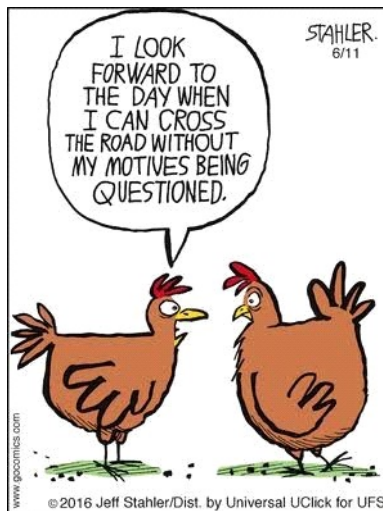
One of the most demanding, but often overlooked, dimensions of the creation story is that when creation was finished, it wasn't really finished at all. Instead, God committed the rest of the process to us. What humans do on this earth either continues creation or obstructs it. It all depends on the way we look at life, the way we see our role in the ongoing creation of the world.

Work is our contribution to creation. It relates us to the rest of the world. It fulfills our responsibility to the future. God left us a world intact, a world with enough for everyone. The contemplative question of the time is what kind of world we are leaving to those who come after us. The contemplative sets out to shape the world in the image of God; to bring the Glory of God into the stuff of the moment, the character of the little piece of the planet for which we are responsible.

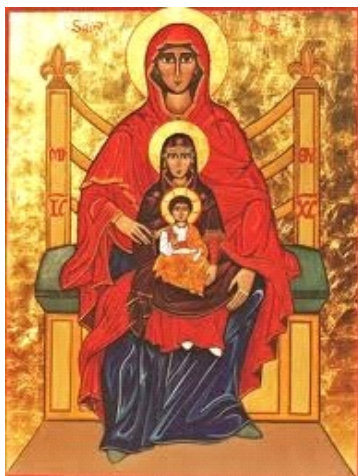
The ideal state, the contemplative knows, is not to avoid work. The first thing Genesis requires of Adam and Eve is that they "*till the garden and keep it*". They are, then, commanded to work long before they sin. Work is not, in Judeo-Christian tradition, punishment for sin. Work is the mark of the conscientiously human. We do not live to outgrow work. We live to work well, to work with purpose, to work with honesty and quality and artistry.

illuminated Life by **Joan Chittister**, the contemplative is overcome by the notion of "*tilling the garden and keeping it*." Work does not distract us from God. It brings the reign of God closer than it was before we came. Work doesn't take us away from God. It continues the work of God through us. Work is the priesthood of the human race. It turns the ordinary into the grandeur of God.

SOURCE: From ***illuminated Life*** (Orbis) by Joan Chittister



THE NATIVITY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY



We cannot be certain what the future holds for any newborn infant, but we do know that the life of each person has meaning and purpose. When Mary was born, the world did not know who she was. Sometimes others—and maybe even you—don't see how special you are. Maybe you forget that God is calling you, too, right now, to do what Mary did—to bring Jesus into the world.

When we celebrate his mother's birth, we honor Jesus too. Today thank God for the gift of life, and give honor to both Mary and Jesus by showing respect and concern for one another—remembering that God has created each person with love and with a call to something very special in life.

SOURCE: Excerpts from ***Saints and Feast Days***
by Sisters of Notre Dame of Chardon, Ohio
www.loyolapress.com

