



## Rest as an Act of Reverence for Creator

This month of June, we joyously cross the threshold of the long-awaited summer season. For many of us, the summer months provide an opportunity to take a respite from our labors, a welcome invitation to pause from our work or studies, and to consider the vital role of rest in our lives.

Our cherished time away from work grants us the benefit of revitalizing ourselves once again, allowing us to return to our labors with renewed minds and spirits.

We human beings are cyclic creatures, repeating patterns of labor and rest on an annual basis, in harmony with the seasons, so that our lives may be filled with order, rhythm, and structure.

The healthy interrelationship between labor and rest is widely affirmed within our contemporary society; our resting from the burdens of work, anxiety, and stress contributes to productive work environments as well as healthy relationships.

Understood as a theological concept, rest is of far more than mere practical or functional significance, however. There is a sacred dimension to rest, a model offered to us by God, Himself, Who according to the Bible rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done (Genesis 2:2). This supreme model suggests that rest is far more than a mere cessation of worldly activity; rather, rest is a spiritually imitative act of profound reverence for our Creator.

To rest is to recognize with humility our privileged place in the grand scheme of God's Creation, to participate in His divine creative act through our human acts of worship, praise, and love.

Thus, our resting from our labors during the summer period can never translate into a "vacation" or departure from our worship and praise of God. Quite the contrary, our resting from our labors grants us especially refreshing opportunities for spiritual renewal, occasions to retreat away from the demands of the workplace so that we may revitalize our souls through prayer and the quiet contemplation of God.

We are given the perfect example of spiritual retreat in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who relieved His intense labors of ministry with the spiritual benefits of rest as an opportunity of being alone with God the Father.

On so many occasions, we find Christ retreating from society in order to find rest and strength through prayer and the contemplation of the will of His Heavenly Father. His regular act of rest was, in and of itself, a spiritually invigorating act, rooted in faithful religious observance, steadfast obedience to God, and undying love for all humanity.

As we enter the summer season, I pray that we may especially remember the sacred dimension of rest, and the tremendous opportunities for spiritual renewal that our periods of vacation present to us.

May God, the Creator of all humankind, keep you forever in His loving protection, and may He transform your time of vacation into a time of spiritual and bodily renewal.