

**So, as I read this Gospel early last week and I said to myself:
“easy, peasy...lemon squeezy!”...just like my grandkids say!**

The apostles were so busy, they didn’t have time to eat....

I know that feeling!

They needed rest, a retreat...I so know that feeling...

and, I think to myself,

Jesus recognizes their needs and tries to help

them by taking them away to a deserted place...

And when they finally get there, there are more people

asking for things, wanting things, needing them...

Just like the old song says: “you can run, but you cannot hide!”

I thought this meditation was a slam dunk...

that was until, I did my research...

And then I started to laugh at myself...

I had done what I always say we ought not to do...

I had taken the Gospel text literally instead of metaphorically...

Ahh...there is no end to the learning that we all must experience!

But before I get into the symbols and metaphors,

I would like to affirm, however, the very real and very important need for self care:

we all need adequate rest and nourishing food for a productive and healthy life. Period.

Now...with that being said, what *is* really going on here?

Remember last week, when Jesus sent the apostles out two by two?

**Well, now they have returned...
and they are excited to tell him all that had happened!
Fair enough! That seems reasonable...**

And Jesus says to them:

“Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while”

**Think about it back then there were no restaurants, no hotels,
no friends with an extra bedroom and swimming pool.**

**Metaphorically Jesus is inviting them to is a deeper connection to the SOURCE of
the power and healing they were experiencing and sharing..
Perhaps they sounded a bit pumped up by their successes...
Perhaps their egos get a little too big for their britches...
Perhaps they simply forget upon whose grace they relied....**

Perhaps...

**Now...it is not bad or wrong to feel good about yourself
when your efforts are met with apparent success...
But Jesus, says...ok, folks...sounds good...
but let's go and reconnect with the source of all this wonder
because you can do more than you even think possible!**

**In other words: they have to become aware and remember whose work they are doing
and by whose power they are doing it...**

**You know, there can be many reasons to do kind and generous work...
Some of us start off doing good because we have been guilt tripped into
giving of ourselves: we better be generous and help or else....
because either our parents or our God or maybe even both will punish us if we don't!**

But most of us really want to do kind and generous work...

**We feel badly for children starving, or an abused puppy,
or a decimated forest or polluted mountain stream...**

**We want to do something to make the world a better place,
so we start working to end the troubles we see.**

And that is good!

**But, but a lot of activists run into a problem sooner or later,
unless they “return to a deserted place” to be nourished by the grace of the Holy One...**

**Many activists eventually burn out, because they are relying
totally on themselves and their gifts, their strength and their energy.**

**THEY have to do x,y or z *instead of* allowing themselves to be conduits of a
Holy power and a Divine and Mysterious grace,
which, of course, is the presence of the Holy One.**

Caryll Houselander was a British Catholic laywoman who lived from 1901-1954.

And she puts the same concept this way:

We are all reeds in the hands of God (a reed being a musical instrument).

**The air that flows through the reed, so that it can make its music,
is the breath of God!**

We make our music with God’s presence blowing freely through our lives.

Put all of us together, with all of our unique talents, gifts and idiosyncrasies...

we are like tubas, piccolos and saxaphones and clarinets...

and we become a magnificent symphony which is

the Reign of Heaven on Earth...

A symphony cannot be created with only one kind of instrument...

that’s why we are all so different!

**the Reign of Heaven needs each of us living and working together
willing to offer our lives for the good of all beings...**

**All of us need to remember that it is the breath God flowing through us,
that enables each of us to play our life's song.....**

**Taking a vacation, getting enough sleep and nourishing food is absolutely necessary
so that we can do the work that needs to be done...**

**But we must also take time to reconnect with God's presence,
to sit and be still and to know whose power it is that empowers us...**

**We must remember to allow God's Grace and Power and Holy Love
to breathe through us unobstructed and unencumbered....**

so that we can play our part in the symphony of the Reign of Heaven on Earth ...

**Ahh...now looking back, this reflection may not have been easy, peasy...
but it I hope it was music for our souls...
and for that we can all surely say "Thank you!" Amen...**