

# Every Perfect Gift

## Mid-Summer Pentecost: The Gift of Rest

In the final two Sundays of July, we get an interplay of the Gospel of Mark and the Gospel of John as they continue the story of Jesus and the many crowds that throng him whenever and wherever he shows up. Whether on this side of the sea or the other, on a hill or on a plain, the crowds find him. Jesus' words invite us to engage the work we are given to do, but also to rest so that we may keep doing our important work in God's vineyard.

We read Mark 6:30-34, 53-36 on the Sunday closest to July 20.

To me, in mid-summer, the fascinating thing about this passage from the lectionary is that it skips the famous part of this story, and just recounts the movement of Jesus. It is as if we are reading the travel log, but without the historical points of interest. We do not read about the feeding of the five-thousand. Instead, we learn that Jesus moved around a lot, that crowds followed him, and that his disciples were exhausted.

Jesus, having compassion on his disciples, extends an invitation.

"Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while."

Certainly, we did not experience a year of multitudes gathering. Even so, the many virtual meetings, webinars and online-classrooms, and socially-distant Zoom gatherings of friends and family extended our screen-time, lengthened our workdays, increased our burdens to communicate. We need rest. Getting away to a deserted place and being with the ones we have not been able to see in so many months feels like just the right thing we need. And it is essential. The work, whether our jobs, our educations, and our families; or our ministry, our volunteering, and our social work must go on. In order to fully engage it, we must have some refreshment. This month offers us the gift of rest. | [TENS.org](https://tens.org)



### QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

**Whether it's God's seventh day, or Jesus' invitation, how do you accept the invitation to rest?**

**How can you make space for others to rest? Are there invitations you can issue to coworkers, loved-ones, or friends to take some time to restore and refresh?**

