

## Mt 11:28-30

Jesus said:

“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.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Jesus is deeply aware of our human condition. He was human like us in all things but sin. And so he experienced the tiredness that he talks about in our gospel today. “Come to me you who are labored and I will give you rest.”

Just as Jesus called the children to himself and blessed them, so he also calls the weary, the labored and those carrying a burden. We can say: the elderly or those who are deeply tired from their work or responsibilities; those who have heavy burdens in life: physical from work or illness; psychological from personal suffering or family situations. Jesus calls those who are burdened – of any

kind – to rest in him; to gain strength in him and be fed by him and be nourished for the journey of our life which has its finality and fulfillment in God's kingdom.

We can *really* get tired in our life if we try to live it without Jesus. If we try and take on all the burdens of life without Jesus, we can experience a deep tiredness and loneliness that only Jesus can solve. And so Jesus says: Come to me you who labor and weary and I will give you rest.

Take up my yoke. What is this yoke Jesus is talking about?

Jesus takes an image from the life of the farmers. Two oxen are joined together under a yoke so that they must walk together and so gain strength from a united force. Two oxen walking under a yoke must walk together. One cannot sit down and the other move forward. One cannot go left and the other right. They must both walk together and share the burden and so achieve the task of plowing. And so Jesus is giving the image of a disciple of his: we are yoked to the Lord. We walk together and we draw strength and direction from the Lord who is carrying the yoke in

our journey with him. And like the image of the oxen of the field, if we are joined with Jesus we cannot get lost or go the wrong way. It is Jesus who is leading us. And it is Jesus with whom we are united.

This concept of yoke exists also in grammar. For we know that one mood in verbs is expressed is subjunctive. The word subjunctive means under the yoke; being joined. In grammar the subjunctive for cannot exist with out the imperative or indicative being expressed or understood. Subjunctive expresses something wished for. Jesus is the imperative: Come to me; and we are the subjunctive, That you may find rest.

Yes, Jesus wants to bear our burdens and cares. He invites us to give over to him all that we are concerned about; or those things that are making us tired and let him refresh us and be our strength. But as Jesus says, Come to me.

We cannot turn over our burdens to Jesus unless we go to him. Open our lives to him, invite him into our hearts to be our strength, to carry our burden. As we read in the book of Book of

Revelation 3:20, "I stand at the door and knock and if anyone would hear my voice and open the door, I will come to him eat with him and he with me."

Our gospel today can be a good source of reflection the rest of this week. What are the areas of my life I need to turn over to Jesus and ask him to bear my load, my tiredness, my cares on my journey with him. Is he standing at the door and knocking and wants to come in and share with me and my family? Let us open the door of our hearts to Jesus with our cares and let him refresh us. For his yoke is easy and his burden light.

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