

16th Sunday of Ordinary Time

Jeremiah 23:1-6
 Psalm 23:1-6
 Ephesians 2:13-18
 Mark 6:30-34

Monday, July 23

Micah 6:1-4,6-8
 Ps 50:5-6,8-9,16-17,21, 23
 Matthew 12:38-42

Tuesday, July 24

Micah 7:14-15,18-20
 Ps 85:2-8
 Matthew 12:46-50

Wednesday, July 25

St. James

2 Corinthians 4:7-15
 Ps 126:1-6
 Matthew 20:20-28

Thursday, July 26

Sts. Joachim and Anne
 Jeremiah 2:1-3,7-8,12-13
 Ps 36:6-11
 Matthew 13:10-17

Friday, July 27

Jeremiah 3:14-17
 Jer 31:10-13
 Matthew 13:18-23

Saturday, July 28

Jeremiah 7:1-11
 Ps 84:3-6a,8a,11
 Matthew 13:24-30

Everyone in ministry feels overwhelmed by their calling from time to time. Whether it's the ministry of raising children, or caring for an elderly spouse or parent, or working a job in a way that reveals Christ, or volunteering at a church or pastoring a parish, it's necessary to take time out for ourselves – a vacation, a holiday – for nourishment and rest and recuperation.

Jesus says so in today's Gospel reading.

If we don't obey this commandment, we become cranky. We make selfish or poor decisions. We become like the evil shepherds of the first reading, who misled and scattered those whom they were called to serve. Why? Because we become vulnerable to temptations when we try to give what we do not have.



has to give. They want the healing and peace that he offers. He wants to help them, but if we who are his hands and feet and voice are too weak and worn out from our hardships, what then?

We need to go to a deserted place with Jesus and rest awhile in his nourishing love. If we go away on a retreat or vacation and come back to our work and ministries still cranky (i.e., if the people we shepherd wish we'd go take a longer trip), we haven't rested enough. We've cut short the restoration process. Never-mind the

pile-up of workload. Jesus is inviting us to "Come away by yourself and rest awhile longer with Me until you become more like Me."

Reflect & Discuss:

1. What work of the Lord has become unhappy for you? What stole your joy? How can you get it back? (You might need a spiritual director to help you figure this out.)
2. What needs of yours must be met before you can feel enthusiastic about ministry? What will you do this week to let Jesus meet these needs?
3. Why do people neglect to give themselves enough time for rest and restoration?
4. What do you do to recharge your energy and restore Christian enthusiasm?

It takes energy to reveal God's love. It takes energy to remain enthusiastic in serving others. But how can we get recharged with new energy if we don't take time to sit still, rest, and pray? How can we care about others when we don't take good care of ourselves? Jesus lives within us, but before we can give him to others, we must first let him give himself to us.

Daily we encounter people who are like sheep without a shepherd; they are seeking Jesus whether they realize it or not. They want the unconditional love that he