

Refreshing an exhausted world

I don't recall a time in my life when so many people felt exhausted. So many people, lately, tell they're just *tired*.

They're not tired from having missed a good night's sleep. They're simply feeling exhausted from *everything*:

- From the Coronavirus and all it's implications;
- From all the economic uncertainty;
- From all the injustices and unrest;
- From the angry divisiveness;
- From the worry of what will happen, come the fall or winter.

It's all exhausting. And even sleep cannot conquer this unrelenting fatigue.

It is to weary spirits that Jesus speaks in this Sunday's gospel reading (Matthew 11:25-30).

"Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest."

The practice of prayer is a repair for weary souls and burdened minds.

Some people think that praying is mostly about saying or reading words. But Jesus is telling us that it is more like an oasis you go to that refreshes and renews the spirit.

Prayer is the place where we put the events of our lives into perspective, the good, the bad, the happy, the sad.

Prayer is the place where we re-prioritize what's important and what isn't, what really counts and what can be put aside.

Prayer is where we listen to the words of Christ and try to see things through the eyes of Jesus rather than simply our own.

Prayer is where you count your blessings and lessons learned.

Prayer is where you go to learn the difference between what you can and cannot change with the wisdom to tell the difference between the two.

The location of prayer can be a quiet corner in your home. Sometimes it's a walk outside, alone. It can be shared with a friend amidst the rush of life. Often enough it is gathered around the altar of our church, a place made sacred by the prayers of thousands who have prayed there before us.

In the end, what matters is that we attend to the refreshing of our souls, lest we risk losing our hope, or the ability to find joy, or (even worse) become bitter for what has happened to the world.

Renewal of the spirit begins *on the inside*. It is not

something I can buy at CVS or acquire by sleeping on a better mattress.

In an overly-tired world, embrace a prayerful path that lifts burdens and revives weariness *from the inside out*.

Life is too precious to be lived exhausted.

Amen.

Fr. Steven Labaire