

Two friends who had not seen one another for a few months met one another by chance in a shopping mall. Quickly, they found an empty bench and began to update each other on what had transpired in their lives since their last meeting. As they spoke, it became quite clear that each was feeling somewhat staggered by the exigencies of life; bouts with illness, a lost job, difficulties with children, conflicts at work, etc. At one point in the conversation, one friend comforted the other with the old adage, "God never allows anyone to be burdened beyond their strength or capacity." The other friend shot back, "Well, I don't think God has checked my load lately!"

Often we feel the same. We are overburdened in one way or another. All of us. We are living in a high-tech, fast-paced age. We like the people of Jesus' time, often do find life burdensome. There is no technology, no robotic machine that can spare us from enduring the spiritual and emotional stress of everyday living.

Jesus' invitation to us today is "Come to Me, all you who labor and are overburdened." He promises: "I will give you rest." In today's gospel, Jesus offers the assurance that God not only knows and appreciates the loads we bear but that God has sent Jesus to share and ease them.

It is not easy to depend on God. We like to be in control of everything and when we can't we become frustrated, anxious, upset and ultimately we learn again to depend on God. A lesson learned and re-learned time and again.

And so, we come together today with Jesus in our midst, seeking rest for our souls. Even if it is only for a short time.