

Homily – Sixth Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 9)

Matthew 11:28–30

By Fr. Carlos

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Today's Gospel contains one of the most comforting invitations in all of Scripture. Jesus says:

"Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest... Take my yoke upon you... and you will find rest for your souls." (Matthew 11:28–29)

I think every one of us can relate to these words. We all know what it means to feel tired. Sometimes it is physical exhaustion. Sometimes it is emotional. Sometimes it is spiritual.

We carry burdens that other people cannot always see: illness, financial worries, family problems, raising children, caring for aging parents, loneliness, uncertainty about the future, immigration concerns, or simply the pressure of trying to hold everything together.

Jesus knows every burden we carry. But notice something important. Jesus does not simply say, 'Go take a vacation.' He says, 'Come to me.' That is because the deepest rest we need cannot be found in a place. It can only be found in a Person.

Have you ever noticed what happens after a vacation? We spend months planning it, travel somewhere beautiful, and hope to return rested. Yet many times we come home even more tired than before. Or we think, 'I just need to sleep,' only to wake up still exhausted. Vacations and sleep are good gifts from God, but they cannot heal the weariness of the soul.

Jesus says, 'Take my yoke upon you.' A yoke joined two oxen together so they could plow a field side by side. They had to walk in the same direction

and at the same pace. That is the image Jesus gives us. He is saying, 'Walk with me. Let me carry the weight with you.'

When we try to carry everything alone, life becomes overwhelming. But when we walk beside Christ, the burden becomes lighter—not because our problems disappear, but because we are no longer carrying them by ourselves.

Saint Paul understood this struggle. In Romans he admits that he cannot always do the good he wants to do. Then he cries out, 'Who will rescue me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!' Paul discovered that our strength is not enough. We need Christ walking beside us.

Paul also reminds us in Romans 8 that when we do not know how to pray, the Holy Spirit intercedes for us. Even when we are too tired to pray, Christ has not left us. He continues walking beside us.

Jesus says, 'Learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart.' His yoke is the way of love: loving God with all our heart and loving our neighbor as ourselves. When love becomes our way of life, we are walking with Christ.

Like the Samaritan woman who found living water in Jesus, today Christ offers us rest for our souls. So whatever burden you are carrying this week, do not carry it alone. Walk beside Jesus. Take His yoke upon you. The greatest rest we will ever find is in the One who says, 'Come to me... and I will give you rest.' Amen.