

Dear Parents,

Where do you find rest? You might be quick to answer, “What’s rest?” I get it. As soon as your kids were born, you jumped on the treadmill of life that seems to never stop. The early years were physically exhausting with the lack of sleep, constant motion, and crazy family schedules. As your kids moved into their teenage years, things didn’t really slow down. Schedules were still busy but in different ways. There are a lot of things that we have to do and deal with that are out of our control but we do have the ability to make some decisions that can lead us to a healthier pace and better place. We can learn how to find rest.

In Exodus 33, we find Moses attempting to lead God’s people out of Egypt to the promised land. Moses has been following the Lord’s instructions and challenging the Israelites in many ways. In a moment of frustration, Moses implores the Lord to do more and give him some help. Verse 14 says, “The Lord replied, ‘My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.’” So, Scripture tells us that the mere presence of God will give us rest. Being with Him can put us in a place of peace.

For me, that begs the question: Am I taking time to be in the presence of God? Am I slowing down enough to give God space to speak to my heart and soul? Or do I keep on keepin’ on, hoping that somehow I can attain some measure of fulfillment on my own? Do I attempt to fill the emptiness of my heart and soul with things of the world, thinking that a sense of busyness will lead me to a feeling of importance? Deep down, I know that I am moving too fast, and I need the presence of God to sustain me. I just need to figure out how to find that kind of rest. So, what does it mean to find our rest in the Lord? In my opinion, it’s like a lot of things in life. It’s not hard to understand, but it is extremely hard to do. When it comes to learning how to slow down and find rest, both physically and emotionally, two things come to mind.

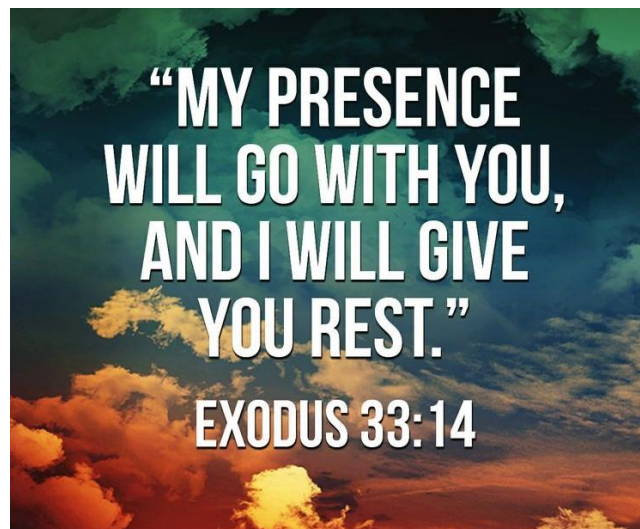
First, I need to regularly set aside time to spend with God, and it really needs to be every day. I need to focus on who He is, how He has shown grace and mercy to me, how He has provided for me, and I need to thank Him for all of that. Secondly, I need to come to truly believe that God is in control and I can trust Him. Oftentimes, our mental and emotional exhaustion stems from our lack of trust and our need to control things in our lives. We need to truly learn how to let go of some things.

As we navigate the craziness of life, learning to find rest is critical. The journey from your child’s first steps to the chaotic teenage years produces the need for a consistent pause. As you navigate the unending demands of life and parenting, it’s essential to remember that the presence of God is what will give you real rest. Check out this week’s resource – it’s called, “A Family Guide to Building Rhythms of Rest.” It will take some time and commitment, but I guarantee you that you and your family will benefit from it. Make some effort to rest in God this week! I hope you find this week’s resource helpful!

Peace,



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A FAMILY GUIDE TO BUILDING RHYTHMS OF REST

Learning how to build rest into our daily rhythms often requires us to be more intentional about implementing some specific practices and disciplines into our daily lives. Although these practices and disciplines are no “magic pill” that will undo years of learned “addiction to being busy” overnight, committing to a more sustainable cadence of rest will, over time, help us to build the new daily rhythms we desire and so desperately need.

This week's Online Parent Ministry's resource called, "*A Family Guide to Building Rest*" is designed to provide you with some practical steps to take over the course of four weeks to begin building habits and laying a foundation for developing a healthier pace that can help you to live in the way rest that God intends for you to live. Please note that this resource is titled ***A Family Guide to Building Rest***, not ***A PARENT_ONLY Guide to Building Rest***. This is as important as it is intentional. My hope is for this guide to encourage **both** you and your entire family to begin implementing these practices and disciplines into your daily lives. As a parent, your example of intentionally choosing rest over an addiction to being busy will help your teenager(s) to rethink and reconsider the prioritization of slowing down, resting, and connecting with the Lord on a regular basis. With that in mind, tweak these habits and practices to fit your family context, and feel free to simplify steps or only use those your teenager(s) can do along with you. Make sure to set aside a few minutes at the end of each week to talk together about what you learned through these exercises.

WEEK 1



Make space on your calendar for five of the seven days. On those days, pick one of these things to do:

- Set aside 15 minutes to read **Psalm 46:1-11**. Reflect on what God wants to say to you through this Scripture.
- Find a quiet spot to sit and listen to one worship song of your choosing. Resist the temptation to do anything else during those songs.
- Make a list of some things you want to pray for when it comes to your family. Spend 10 minutes praying for these items and anything else that comes to mind.
- Take 10 minutes to journal about what has been going on in your life this week. Ask God to show you what He wants to teach you through your current circumstances.
- Take a 15-minute walk outside without a device. Use that undistracted time to thank God for the things He has made and provided for you.

WEEK 2



Make space on your calendar for five of the seven days. On those days, pick one of these things to do:

- Set aside 15 minutes to read **John 10:1-19**. Reflect on what God wants to say to you through this Scripture.
- Find a quiet spot to sit and listen to two worship songs of your choosing. Resist the temptation to do anything else during those songs.

- Make a list of five people to pray for and the things you want to put before God. Spend 10 minutes praying for them and anything else that comes to mind.
- Take 15 minutes to journal about what has been going on in your life this week. Ask God to show you what He wants to teach you through your current circumstances.
- Take a 15-minute walk outside without a device. Use that undistracted time to thank God for the things He has made and provided for you.

WEEK 3

Make space on your calendar for five of the seven days. On those days, pick one of these things to do:

- Set aside 15 minutes to read **Philippians 4:4-8**. Reflect on what God wants to say to you through this Scripture.
- Find a quiet spot to sit and listen to three worship songs of your choosing. Resist the temptation to do anything else during those songs.
- Make a list of five some things you need to pray for when it comes to you. Spend 10 minutes praying for God to move in you and anything else that comes to mind.
- Take 20 minutes to journal about what has been going on in your life this week. Ask God to show you what He wants to teach you through your current circumstances.
- Take a 30-minute walk outside without a device. Use that undistracted time to thank God for the things He has made and provided for you.

WEEK 4

Make space on your calendar for five of the seven days. On those days, pick one of these things to do.

- Set aside 15 minutes to read **1 John 1:5-10**. Reflect on what God wants to say to you through this Scripture.
- Find a quiet spot to sit and listen to four worship songs of your choosing. Resist the temptation to do anything else during those songs.
- Make a list of some things you want to pray for when it comes to your family. Spend 10 minutes praying for these items and anything else that comes to mind.
- Take 20 minutes to journal about what has been going on in your life this week. Ask God to show you what He wants to teach you through your current circumstances.
- Take a 30-minute walk outside without a device. Use that undistracted time to thank God for the things He has made and provided for you.



The Catholic Youth Community of St. John Neumann