

## The rhythm of rushing and resting

### Mark 6.30-34,53-56

Jesus is in demand once again, news of his teaching and actions is spreading rapidly. He tries to find a quiet place, recognising its value for himself and the disciples, but the crowds still follow.

Now read **Mark 6.30-34,53-56** see p.2 for text.

### A note on the passage

Jesus experiences the tensions in his ministry, tensions which we all feel in some areas of our lives. He feels compelled to be useful and busy but also recognises the need to be quiet and to draw on inner strength. He encourages others to find their quiet place, too. In order to show compassion and to care for others, we need to nurture ourselves spiritually. Ask yourself: How and where do I find time to be still and find energy to carry on? Can I encourage others to find stillness too?

## CREATE

John Wesley once said that he knew his mother was having some time with God when she turned her apron up and over her head. Even in busy family life she managed to shut out the world and find her quiet space. Consider setting up a quiet corner in your home where you can find inner space more easily, it could become your 'holy ground'. If you wish, gather items to put in it – e.g. a Bible, cross, icon, candle, whatever you find helpful. If you lack space, the inside of a cupboard door can be put to good use!



Where could you make a quiet 'corner' in your home?



Offer to help someone else find their quiet space this week. This might involve, for example, doing some shopping for them, minding the children, sitting with an elderly or sick relative.

## LISTEN

Listen to the hymn 'Be still for the presence of the Lord', sung by Aled Jones. Imagine yourself standing on 'holy ground' before God.

<https://youtu.be/ZMaOxdu6B4>



## Morning Reflection

Read this week's Gospel passage every morning, perhaps using different Bible versions if you have them (or look some up at [www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com)). Read it slowly with pauses after each sentence. Try to notice new thoughts which come from it and perhaps make a note of them.



## Be Still

If you are with children, play a game of 'Sleeping Lions' – that is, see who can remain perfectly still for the longest possible time. Ask both children and adults taking part: What helped you to keep still and what they you thinking about as you did it?

If you are on your own, challenge yourself to be still for as long as possible. Allow yourself to relax and feel the tensions drain away. What helps you to maintain a sense of stillness? Does music or a visual focus help? Can you do this daily, increasing the time as the week progresses? Looking for a meditation challenge? Try the Headspace app.

## EVENING REFLECTION

Look back across your day and identify where and how you experienced any moments of stillness. Remember that even in your busy-ness, God was with you. You may not have been aware of it, you may have forgotten – God did not. Ask yourself what new insights today has given you about God, yourself, or others.

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## Mark 6.30-34,53-56

Choose a version of the passage to read. The first is the ROOTS version for children, the second is the NRSV text which may be suitable for older children, young people and adults.

**T**he apostles returned from their journeys around the villages and gathered round Jesus to tell him all that they had done and taught. He said to them, 'Come away with me to a quiet place so that you can rest for a while.' There were so many people coming and going around them that he and the apostles didn't even have time to eat! So they went away in a boat to a deserted place all by themselves.

But many people saw them set off in the boat and they hurried from all the nearby towns to meet them when they landed. When Jesus went ashore, he saw a great crowd and he had compassion for them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So he began to teach them many things.

Later Jesus and the apostles crossed over the lake in the boat and came to land at Gennesaret. Immediately as they got out of the boat and tied it up, people recognised Jesus, and rushed from all over the region, bringing sick people on mats to



wherever he was. And no matter where Jesus went, into farms or villages or cities, people laid out the sick in the marketplaces, and begged him that they might just touch the fringe of his cloak. And everyone who touched it was healed.

Mark 6.30-34,53-56

### Did you know?

- Jesus often goes away by himself.
- Gennesaret is a place on the north-western shore of Lake Galilee.

## Mark 6.30-34,53-56 (NRSV)

The apostles gathered around Jesus, and told him all that they had done and taught. He said to them, 'Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while.' For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. And they went away in the boat to a deserted place by themselves. Now many saw them going and recognized them, and they hurried there on foot from all the towns and arrived ahead of them. As he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them, because they were like sheep

without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things. When they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret and moored the boat. When they got out of the boat, people at once recognized him, and rushed about that whole region and began to bring the sick on mats to wherever they heard he was. And wherever he went, into villages or cities or farms, they laid the sick in the market-places, and begged him that they might touch even the fringe of his cloak; and all who touched it were healed.