



# LITURGY LESSON

## The Lord's Day - lesson 9

Cincinnati Archbishop Daniel Pilarczyk recently wrote about the idea of Sunday and the Sabbath rest. He remembered being taught that we were supposed to abstain from “work” on Sundays. In Old Testament book of Exodus (20: 8-11) we read, “Remember the Sabbath day, and keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work. But the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God; you shall not do any work. The Lord blessed the Sabbath day and consecrated it.” For Catholics Sunday was to be a day of rest and recreation after going to Mass.

Perhaps we don't work on Sunday, but sometimes it seems that we don't rest much, either. People's time seems so totally committed to sports and shopping and getting caught up, that resting or even spending quiet time with family and friends have simply gotten lost. We tend to view Sunday as the day we catch up on everything we didn't get to during the week.

Pope John Paul II in his Apostolic letter *Dies Domini* speaks of Sunday as a day of remembering God's grand work of creation and to rest not only as God rested, but to rest in the Lord with praise and thanksgiving. Sunday is a day to do different things than we do during the rest of the week - more spiritual things, more reflective things. It is supposed to be a day of refocusing our lives, of counterbalancing ceaseless activity with grateful attention to the Lord's goodness to us. These activities will keep us aware of our own giftedness and our own debt of gratitude to our generous Father, things that will bring us joy.



A wonderful image of Sunday comes from the gospel of Luke in the narrative about the two disciples walking to Emmaus on the first Christian Sunday. They were taking comfort in each other's company and discussing their common concerns as they walked along. Soon they found themselves joined by someone else, and they walked in the company of the Lord. The meaning of their being together became clear when they sat at supper together and Jesus broke bread with them. The breaking of the bread, walking with the Lord, spending time together: That's what Sunday is supposed to be about.

