

August 12, 2025

Daily Reflections



SOULFUL REST

By Sister Jane DeLisle, CSJ

Today's Gospel

"Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart."

PSALM 147:22

Reflection

Hearing today's Gospel, I find myself eager to listen deeply and respond to Jesus' invitation to learn from him. His life plays out in the New Testament, offering four viewpoints on his life, death, and resurrection. Held in the simple words above are secrets to a fuller life. I yearn to learn from him and live in his way.

In doing some research on the yoke we are encouraged to embrace, I

discovered that Jesus' yoke symbolizes *grace, spiritual rest, and genuine relationship with Him, while legalism emphasizes strict adherence to rules and external appearances, neglecting the heart's condition.*

We are urged to take on His yoke of relationship, rooted in grace and guidance, and to take up the opportunity for rest. (Matthew 11:28-30) His yoke promises to be easy and His burden light because it comes with support and empowerment from Jesus himself -- so I might live a life listening to his guidance and following his way of being in the world.

The rest promised is spiritual rest for my soul, the quiet way of simple being in God's presence. Spiritual rest stands in sharp contrast to the relentless striving that characterizes much of everyday work. Spiritual rest far outweighs a legalistic approach to faith, for my being is embraced in a personal relationship with Jesus, who is "gentle and humble of heart"; and at the same time, the relationship is communal with and among my "dear neighbors." It is in the union of these relationships that burdens are shared, and efforts are supported, all the while fulfilling God's commandments with joy rather than fear. We are always in a relationship of mutual love and accompaniment.

Sign me up for this "YOKE!" for together in the way of Jesus, I am drawn to be one with God and the dear neighbor. Community has been a saving grace for me, and I would imagine for others as well. A yoke is for two or more to work together as one. We are called as One, together in the way of Jesus who is gentle strength, compassionate listening, and abiding presence. This is the way of our Creator that Jesus reflected among us. The way of Jesus, of God, is to be in a community of mutual support. Then the burdens each carries are made light in carrying them together. The yoke we bear is one of *unioning* love and all-permeating presence of the Holy Spirit. The spiritual rest promised is found in inner transformation. This way stands in sharp contrast to that of legalism of following laws, rules that can quickly turn to judgement and self-righteousness and promoting a "them verses us" attitude. Bearing the yoke of Jesus transforms my heart to find my peace, harmony, and well-being in that of my dear neighbor, without distinction. Our life is one of relationships rooted in unconditional love, not simply legalistic compliance to rules and rituals.

As I come to know more deeply the heart of Jesus, I discover circles of communion that draw us as one in love and relationship. Rather than self-justification and fear of punishment, the yoke of Jesus is one of mutuality and shared responsibility in revealing the Kingdom within our souls for the sake of a united world. We were created to be in life-giving and mutual relationship. In this we are already one and called to accompany one another on the way.



Two Yoked Donkeys Pull a Cart Together

For Pondering

Ask yourself:

- How do I experience the “yoke of God’s great love?”
- What causes me to resist the yoke of this scripture?
- For what grace, help, blessing do I ask so as to accept God’s community of mutual relationship?

For Prayer

*Gracious Creator and Soul Friend,
make my heart like your own.
Reveal to me the lightness of your yoke of loving relationship.
Give rest to my soul, teach me your ways,
deepen our relationship so my heart may be transformed to like your own.
May I become a hospitable place for all those in need*

*and for every neighbor which enters my circle of influence.
Teach me to find sport in communities of compassion, mercy,
forgiveness, and hope.
Amen.*

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