

For Parents...

Life in 21st century America is busy. Many people complain of hectic schedules, unending demands, and never-ending "to do lists." Being on the go 24/7 has become the norm for too many, even for our children.

In the Judeo-Christian tradition that helped form our American society, the idea of "Sabbath," or day of rest, has always played a significant role that positively affect our lifestyles. Our faith traditions reminded us that one day a week was supposed to be different from the others. Specifically, Sunday was the traditional day that people reserved for a time of rest and reprieve from a busy week, with Christian worship primarily taking place on this morning. Over the past few decades, however, more and more activities have crept into the Sunday morning schedule - from school programs to school and town sporting events and leagues - turning an opportunity for peace and rest into just another busy and stressful day like every other.

This scheduling of events has forced our young people into the sometimes difficult dilemma of choosing between playing on a sports team or going to church. Parents are also left with a predicament of transporting their children to and supporting them at these events, or resting and/or attending their churches for worship. This quandary is quite pervasive.

In their Statement of Concern of "Youth Sports and Public Activities on Sunday Mornings," the Massachusetts Council of Churches noted: "A pattern of public insensitivity to the religious traditions of our churches has emerged, while at the same time many community leaders are talking about the importance of supporting "family values" by providing moral education of youth through family and religious life."

How do you observe the Sabbath? What does Sabbath mean to you?

Sabbath Challenge

Choose four windows of opportunity between now and December 31, 2009 to:

- Rest your body and your mind
- Reflect on life's deeper meaning
- Reconnect with family, friends, and community
- Reclaim your time
- Replenish your energy
- Renew your relationship with Jesus Christ
- Recreate balance