

REBUILD THE BODY

***A Lenten Guide for
Resting Well***



*Faith, Fitness, and Finding
Downtime for the Busy Catholic*

BY MARTY LANGLOIS

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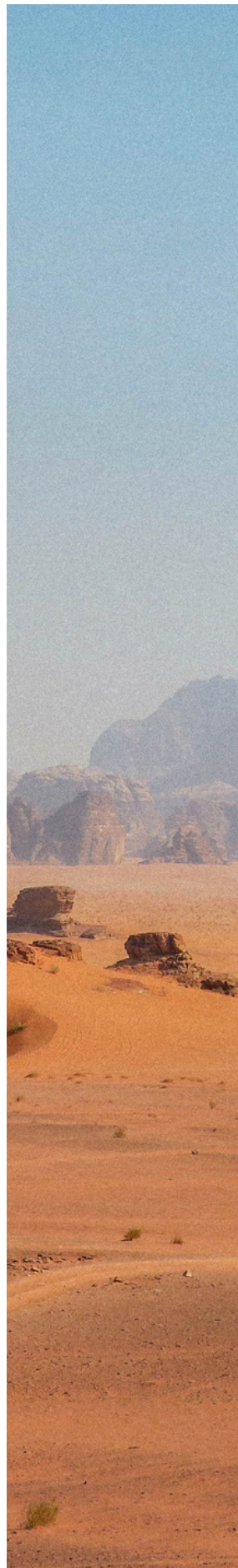
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Introduction

Lent is not just about fasting and sacrifice-- it is also about renewal. Rest is a forgotten discipline in today's fast-paced world, yet it is necessary for both body and soul. St. Augustine reminds us, "*Our hearts are restless until they rest in You.*" Finding intentional downtime is not laziness; it is a return to our created purpose.

Philosopher Josef Pieper, in *Leisure: The Basis of Culture*, explains that true leisure is not just inactivity but a receptivity to God and His creation. Lent is the perfect time to integrate our faith and fitness journey-- learning to rest so we can rebuild stronger.

Each week, focus on one way to embrace leisure and rest, bringing balance to your mind, body, and soul.

“Our hearts are restless until they rest in You.”

-St. Augustine

About Me



In 2019, three weeks after my daughter was born, I suffered a stroke that caused right side paralysis. Recovery was slow and humbling, but one of the biggest lessons I learned wasn't about movement-- it was about *rest*.

True healing required patience, trust, and surrender. As I rebuilt my strength, I discovered rest isn't just physical-- it's spiritual. When I allowed space for God's grace, both my body and faith grew stronger.

Now, as The Catholic Fitness Coach, I help others integrate faith and fitness, trusting the process and embracing rest as a key to progress. Just as our bodies need recovery to grow, our souls need stillness to be renewed. Let God rebuild you-- one step at a time.

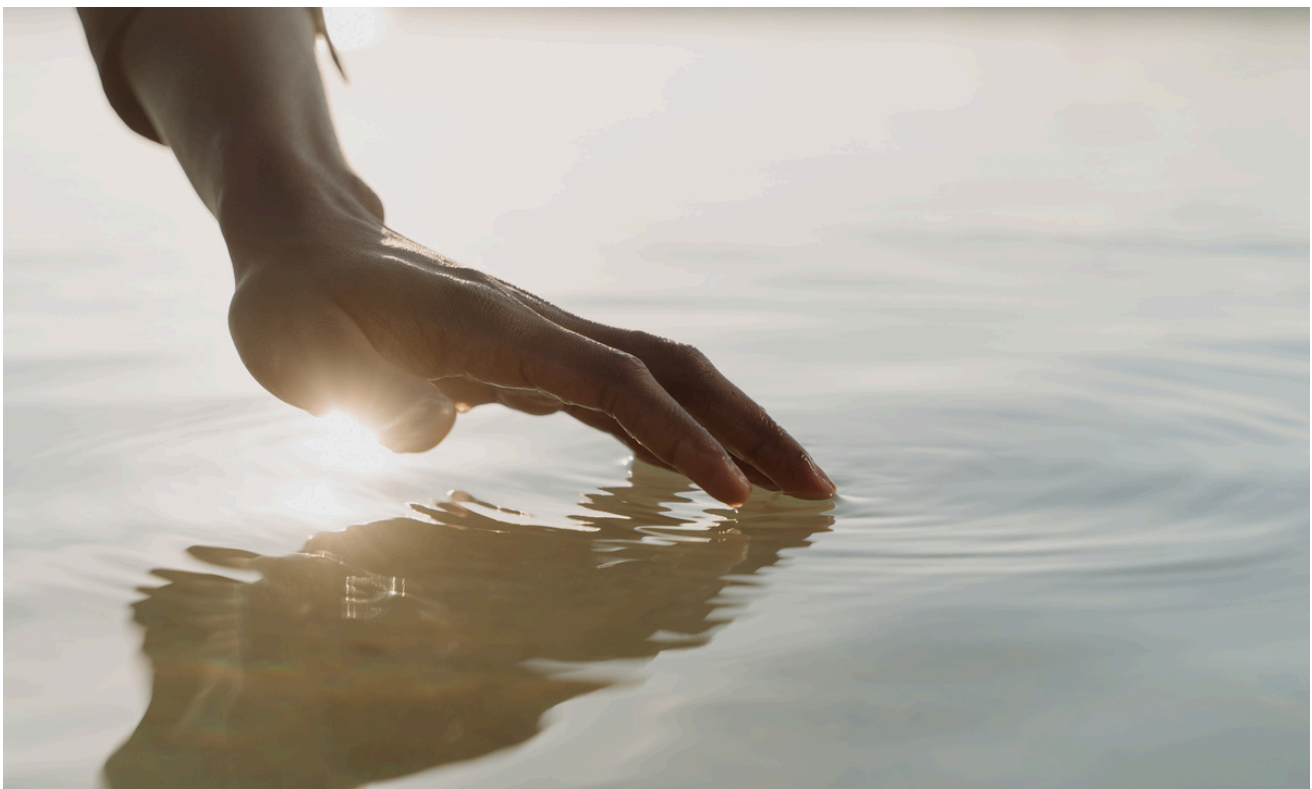
Marty



Week **Sabbath and** ***1*** **Stillness--** --- **Rest as Worship**

Faith Reflection: “*Be still and know that I am God.*” -- Psalm 46:10

Pieper argues that leisure is deeply tied to worship. If we don't learn to rest in God, we will fill our lives with endless busyness. True leisure is not escape, but *presence*-- being still before God, allowing Him to refresh us.



Fitness Reflection

Rest days are essential for muscle growth. Just as we need time off from training, our souls need rest from striving.

Active recovery-- like light stretching or a walk in nature-- mirrors spiritual rest by allowing renewal without pressure.



Action Step

Choose a time this week for complete stillness-- no phone, no to-do lists-- just resting in God's presence.

Reflect on how rest glorifies Him.

Week

2

Deep Prayer and Breathing-- Resting in God's Presence

Faith Reflection: *“Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest.” -Matthew 11:28*



Prayer is not just speaking-- it is listening, receiving, and *being*. Pieper reminds us that modern workaholicism keeps us from seeing life as a gift. Intentional, restful prayer brings us back to God's rhythm.

Fitness Reflection

Deep breathing and mindfulness exercises improve oxygen flow, reduce stress, and aid performance.

Just as our bodies need breath, our souls need moments of deep exhale-- giving our burdens to Christ.



Action Step

Incorporate deep breathing into your prayer this week.

Try inhaling for four counts, hold for four, and exhaling for four as you say, *“Jesus, I trust in You.”*

Week **Simplicity-- Clearing** **3** **Mental and Physical** **Clutter**

Faith Reflection: “Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things, but one thing is necessary.” - Luke 10:41-42

Our minds are often restless because of *clutter*-- both physically and mentally. Pieper warns against “total work” mentality that leaves no room for contemplation. Simplicity in our schedules, workouts, and routines opens space for God.



Fitness Reflection

Overtraining or constantly chasing fitness trends can lead to burnout.

Simplify your workouts by focusing on quality over quantity. A well-structured, intentional plan is better than trying to do *everything*.



Action Step

Declutter one area of your life this week-- your schedule, a workout habit, or even a physical space.

See how less distraction brings more peace.

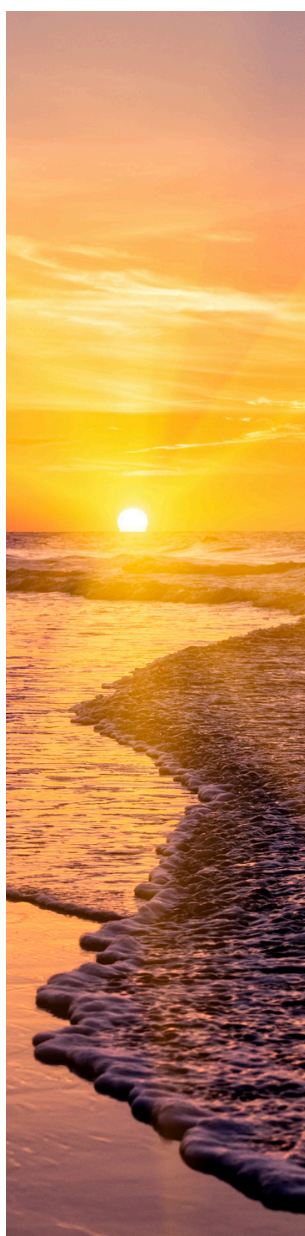
Week

4

Deep Prayer and Breathing-- Resting in God's Presence

**Faith Reflection: *“He leads me beside
still waters; He restores my soul.” -
Psalm 23:2-3***

66



Pieper emphasizes leisure connects us to beauty. When we immerse in God's creation, we rediscover His presence. Whether through a sunrise walk or simply stepping outside, nature calls us to rest.

Fitness Reflection

Instead of seeing movement as *work*, try seeing it as *worship*.

A light jog, a long walk, or even stretching outside can be a prayer in itself. Honor God with your body while letting nature restore your mind.



Action Step

Spend at least 15 minutes outside daily this week, fully present in the moment.

Week

5

Letting Go-- Rest from Perfectionism and Control

Faith Reflection: “Do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will take care of itself.” - Matthew 6:34

Many of us struggle with perfectionism-- spiritually and physically. Pieper reminds us that work should not define our worth. Learning to let go and trust God allows true rest.



Fitness Reflection

You don't need the "perfect" workout to make progress.

Overanalyzing every calorie or exercise can lead to mental exhaustion. Trust the process-- your body is rebuilding even on lighter days.



Action Step

Write down one thing you need to let go of-- whether it's fear, a fitness goal, or a personal struggle-- and surrender it to God.

Week

6

Entering Holy Week with Silence and Surrender



Faith Reflection: *"It is finished."*

-John 19:30

“

Holy Week calls us to pause. Pieper writes that leisure is “not the absence of work but the presence of celebration.” Christ’s sacrifice invites us to stop striving and receive His love.

Fitness Reflection

Tapering before a race or challenge allows peak performance.

Holy Week is a time to spiritually taper-- slowing down, preparing our hearts, and entering deeply into Christ's Passion.



Action Step

Spend time in silence each day this week meditating on Christ's suffering and love. Let stillness be an act of surrender.



Final Reflection:

The Resurrection and True Rest

“

Rest is not about sleep or inactivity -- it is about restoring our connection with God.

Pieper teaches that true leisure is an act of faith, a trust in something greater than ourselves.

As we journey through Lent, let's reclaim rest as *worship*. Just as our bodies need recovery to rebuild, our souls need stillness to be renewed. May this Lent lead to the ultimate rest found in Christ's Resurrection.

#LentenRebuild Challenge

- ✓ Choose one of these weekly themes to focus on each day of Holy Week.
- ✓ Share reflections or progress using #LentenRebuild-- encouraging others to embrace faith-filled rest.
- ✓ Enter into Easter truly renewed-- spiritually and physically.

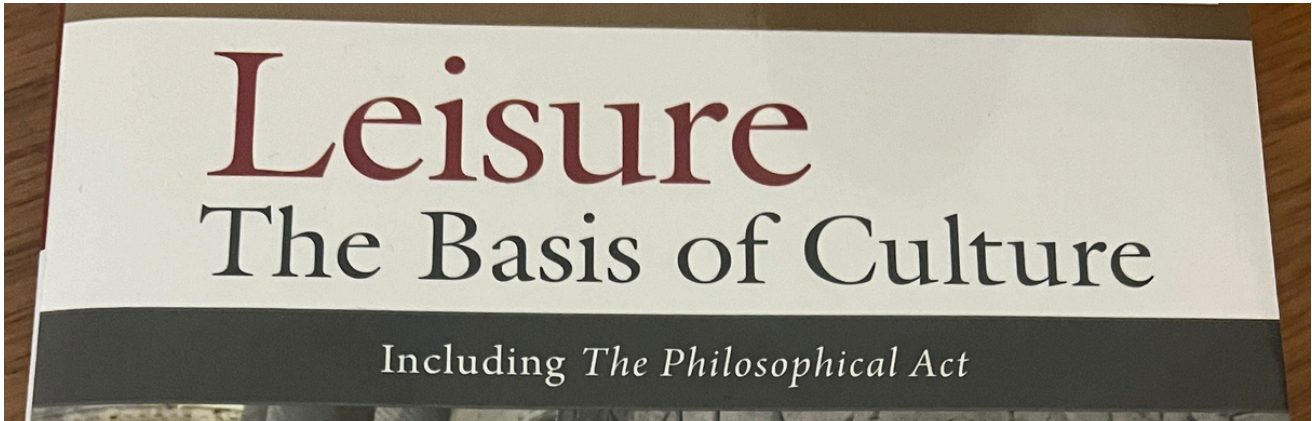
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He is Risen!
Let us rest in His victory.

-MARTY LANGLOIS



Additional Resources



Books

Leisure: The Basis of Culture - Josef Pieper; Theology of the Body- John Paul II

Scripture

Psalm 46:10; Matthew 11:28-30; Exodus 33:14; Mark 6:31; Isaiah 40:31

Catholic Prayers

Lectio Divina; The Rosary; Anima Christi Prayer

Catholic Podcasts

Rebuild the Body; The Catholic Coaching Podcast; Cycles and Sanctity; Persistence in Prayer

Conclusion and Next Steps

Lent has been a journey of rest, renewal, and rebuilding-- not just physically, but spiritually. Learning to embrace holy rest has allowed you to grow strong in both faith and fitness, trusting God's process rather than constantly striving.

As you move forward, remember that rest is not an end-- it's part of the process. Just as our muscles rebuild in recovery, our souls are strengthened when we surrender to God's timing

THE 4 CATHOLIC TEMPERAMENTS & WORKING OUT:

DEVELOPING A HEALTHY BODY IMAGE AND
GETTING FIT



**Did you know your Catholic temperament affects
how your approach fitness?**

Understanding you God's given
temperament can help you find a
workout routine that's sustainable,
fulfilling, and spiritually enriching

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