

July 2010

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Summer is already here. Perhaps we long for this time as an opportunity to relax and renew ourselves spiritually, physically and psychologically. Yet I wonder if we know how to use this time and if we know how to relax. I recently came across a gem of an article written in 1965 by the late Cardinal Suenens entitled "How to Relax." His views are as timely and appropriate now as they were then. Let me share a few paragraphs for your own thoughtful reflection:

To acquire the art of relaxing, we must become children at heart again — we must find sound and wholesome forms of amusement.

Modern life is lived at high tension; its pace is intense and nerves get frayed. Whatever it costs, we must learn how to stop, when we need to, and draw a quiet breath . . .

We must not live at such an intensive, hustling pace that we no longer have time to — have time. To be relaxed makes one accessible to others . . .

We stand in need of rest—in the ordinary sense of the word, and also rest in God. We must find a place for him in the bustle of the day; a place for private prayer, for slow and meditative reading. We need this 'oxygen.' It is one of our vital necessities. It is a good thing to sit down, like Mary, at the Master's feet, before we go off to carry out our daily tasks. In the midst of work, we must keep our hearts open to God. It helps so much to keep things in their proper proportion if we leave a window open to heaven....

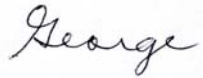
Looking at the heavens is the form of relaxation we can least dispense with if we want to keep things in their perspective and make the world a better place to live in.

As we go about our summer activities, let us ponder these significant words of Cardinal Suenens and see if we can better learn the art of relaxing.

Attached are the feast days for the month of July.

It has been my pleasure over these last three years to send out these monthly letters and feast days. I have appreciated your feedback and comments on their usefulness. As I move on to another ministry, I ask for your prayerful support.

Affectionately,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "George".

George J. Cerniglia, SM