

FINDING REST

74. A primary manifestation of our humble response to God's gift is the way we care for ourselves body, soul and spirit (1 *Thessalonians* 5: 23). It is a feature of our society that some people seek fulfilment in destructive ways, for example, the abuse of drugs or sexuality. Such misguided ways of life can result in grave physical, mental and spiritual harm. The problem of self-destructive behaviour can be seen as a spiritual as well as a psychological problem. We need to help one another to appreciate the goodness of life and to hold on to the real possibility of living life well, even in difficult circumstances. Fundamental to this is discovering a proper kind of self-love and self-respect.

75. We need to understand and resist the influences that spread despair and undermine the spontaneous love of life. We, as well as our political representatives, should turn our attention not only to the state of the economy and national security, but to the conditions in which people live. Space, rest and recreation - in the proper meaning of that term - are vital to human well-being. The physical environment in which people live and work, their job security, and the time they have available for nurturing relationships with friends and within the family can either enhance or undermine a culture of life and hope.

76. Some people suffer because they are forced to work long hours with little time off so that they feel continually both physically and mentally exhausted. For others work can become a kind of addiction which they find exhilarating, but which becomes both self-destructive and particularly dispiriting for their families. There is a wisdom in the biblical commandment that one particular day of the week be set aside as a common day away from work. Sunday trading regulations aimed to protect a common day of rest for the sake of leisure, family life and spiritual recuperation for everyone. The continual erosion of these laws threatens the existence of any common public rest and is making our society one of ceaseless activity.

77. For Christians, Sunday is not only a day for rest and for family life, but also a day for prayer and the worship of God. Prayer, both individual and communal, is a natural expression of the human spirit and a central part of every religious faith. It is the pre-eminent source and expression of spiritual well-being.

QUESTIONS

Does the group feel that the increase of drug abuse and other forms of abuse run hand in hand with the absence of religion in peoples' lives?

Business or activism seems a status symbol of our times. Is over-work and feverish activity just another form of addiction? Discuss

Is activism a smokescreen for the absence of an interior life in a person? Discuss

Have we lost the special nature of Sunday being the Lord's Day? Discuss