

Some years ago Bob Oerter, then pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Boulder, Colorado, led a retreat in which I heard him say, "Learn to live with the load of the unfinished!"

That phrase has stuck with me ever since. His point was no matter how much you and I do, there is always more to be done. The society we live in has become ever more manic, ever more driven with a sense that we have to, "get all of this stuff done."

Bob's point was not to get all the stuff done but to learn to live with reality of the unfinished and to deliberately take time to be with our Lord and with those we love. Life isn't about finishing the do list. It is about getting on with our relationships.

Jesus certainly lived a rather busy life. At one point Mark describes what was going on around Jesus this way, "For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat." (Mark 6:31b) Clearly Jesus knew what the load of the unfinished felt like.

In the very midst of this crazy time with no time even to eat, Jesus said to the apostles, "Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while." (Mark 6:31a)

May you learn to live with the load of the unfinished in your life this Advent season and take the time to center yourself on the Lord who loves you and the people God gives you!

With joy – E. Stanley Ott, December 13, 2012 Vol. 11, No. 27, *LIVING*

Prayer Suggestions

- > We all need to take today's message to heart. Ask our Heavenly Father to help us stay centered on the importance and significance of the Advent season to our lives. God gave us a Gift that nothing else can match, Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior.
- > Be thankful to God that we live in a country where we are free to practice our religion, speak to others about it, and if we wish, display symbols of it, without fear. May it always be that way.
- > At this time of year, when most people feel joy and love, there are people who are suffering physically and emotionally. Ask God for eyes to see and hearts to feel, so that we can try to help them by caring and sharing.
- > Pray that God will watch over all those men and women who are serving our country in dangerous places in the world and not able to be with their families for Christmas. Also, lift up our police and fire personnel who are keeping us safe.
- > Pray for Pastor Jeff and all who are working so hard in our church to make this Christmas season special for all our members and guests. May God bless this undertaking, and may we feel His presence as we celebrate the birth of our Savior.
- > As always, ask God to watch over all those on our prayer list, and touch each of them with His comfort, peace, healing and love.

