

# Heartbeats

## The Company of St. Angela in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

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### Time for Refreshment and Renewal: Living in the Sabbath Spirit

Summer usually offers us a change of pace; it may give us some time for vacation, a time to be refreshed and renewed, to step outside our usual environment, daily schedule, and many responsibilities. With this in mind, *Heartbeats* offers some reflection suggestions to match the summer season: some reflective pieces on the theme of “sabbath time” and some suggestions for books and movies for those who find these media relaxing.

*“The meaning of Sabbath is to celebrate time rather than space. Six days a week we live under the tyranny of things of space; on the Sabbath we try to become attuned to holiness in time. It is a day on which we are called upon to share what is eternal in time, to turn from the results of creation to the mystery of creation; from the world of creation to the creation of the world”.*

Abraham Joshua Heschel, [The Sabbath](#)

*“Sabbath time is time off the wheel, time when we take our hand from the plow and let God and the earth take care of things, while we drink, if only for a few moments, from the fountain of rest and delight.”*

Wayne Muller, [Sabbath](#)

### **Remember the Sabbath and Keep it Holy.**

Maybe because at this time of year I feel more empty than full, I have been thinking about the idea of *sabbath* and what I need to do in order to replenish my energy and to renew my creativity and to be able to do more than just the next thing on the list.

Here’s my idea.

What about this as an exercise in faithfulness?

What if instead of thinking about the upcoming couple of months as summer;

Or, your upcoming time away as vacation;

What if you thought about it and approached it as *sabbath*?

As time you intentionally carve out from the busyness and business of life as it usually is.

To live differently.

To bring a different attitude and outlook to the moment you have.

To look at your life and the time of your life as gift.

And, then to see what happens.

Maybe it means using these days to intentionally cultivate a deeper sense of gratitude. Maybe it means using this time to say thank you more times than you complain or shake your head or point your finger. Maybe it means going at a pace which enables you to pay enough attention that you notice those things...that something...which takes your breath away. Maybe there is something about having time and energy to help that is a part of holiness. Maybe it is slowing down enough that you notice the daily grace which brushes up against your life. Maybe.

*Remember the Sabbath and keep it holy.*

“Summer Sabbath” from the Blog: We Get There by Walking



# Five Ways to Make your Summer a Sabbath

Sarah Markley

1. **Change your routine** — This is a perfect time to do what we don't normally do.
2. **Breathe outdoor air** — Stay outside, dig your toes in grass and sand and get some sun.
3. **Do what you find restful** — Redirect attention to things that fill us. Get some rest.
4. **Indulge a little** — Watch your favorite movie; read a good novel.
5. **Prioritize** — Decide what is essential and focus on that.

## Suggested Reading

**Ready Player One** by Ernest Cline — *recommended for an "All School Summer Read" at Ursuline in Dallas, 2017.* (Movie version 2018) This science fiction thriller is set in 2045, when most people are escaping into virtual reality. A group of teens fights to keep their on-line playground out of the hands of an evil corporation at a time when the world is on the brink of chaos and collapse. Steven Spielberg's movie with amazing visual effects stays true to much of the book, which both celebrates and critiques online culture.

**Rent Collector** by Cameron Wright — *recommended for an "All School Summer Read" at Ursuline in St. Louis, 2018.* This fact-based novel follows a young family with a very sick child, living and working in a monstrous city dump in Cambodia. Sopeap Sin, who collects rent for dwellings in the dump, is asked by the young mother of the family to teach her to read and learn to appreciate literature. Sopeap Sin is a former professor who has lived through the Khmer Rouge period, which greatly impacted her life. This is a story of hope and redemption and how literacy can change lives.

**Jetta's Story** by Martha Coughlin, OSU. Tells of a Jewish teen who, with her family, has fled Yugoslavia during WWII, and finds a refuge at the Ursuline Generalate in Rome. Based on diaries of two Ursuline nuns living there.

**Before We Were Yours** by Lisa Wingate. Based on a notorious true-life scandal in Memphis in 1939; Georgia Tann, director of an adoption organization, kidnaps and sells poor children to wealthy, often celebrity, families. The story weaves a tale of the enduring power of five siblings who struggle to stay together despite plans to separate them.

**Creation and the Cross: the Mercy of God for a Planet in Peril** by Elizabeth Johnson. Focuses on God's engagement with all creation. The author challenges theologies of "satisfaction" and "atonement" with a theology of accompaniment, holding the faith conviction that God forever companions the world with liberating, saving mercy.

**On the Brink of Everything: Grace, Gravity and Getting Old** by Parker Palmer. Release date: June 26, 2018.

Priscilla McNamara, an associate in New Rochelle and avid reader, recommends:

**After the Darkness** by Sidney Sheldon

**The Art of Hearing Heartbeats** by Jan-Philipp Sendker

**The Language of Flowers** by Vanessa Diffenbaugh

**The Lemon Orchard** by Luanne Rice

**State of Wonder** by Anne Pachette

**What Alice Forgot** by Liane Moriarty

## Movie Suggestions

**"Pope Francis: A Man of His Word"** is a documentary that beautifully portrays hope and lived faith, showing Francis' concern about humanity and the earth. Has a lyrical, poetic, contemplative quality.

**"Wonder"** shows how superficial differences among people can be and the wonderful things that can happen when we get past those differences and get to know each other for who we really are.

**"I Can Only Imagine"** is an up-lifting, faith-based film that tells the story behind MercyMe's hit song of the same name.

**"What Lies Upstream"** a documentary produced by PBS and shown in May, tells the story of the largest water crisis to occur in the United States in January, 2014, in West Virginia, barely four months before the famous Flint water crisis. Now available for rental.

**"Summer in the Forest"**, a beautiful, contemplative look at the life of the L'Arche communities and the founder, Jean Vanier. This follows the story of the four men with intellectual disabilities who joined Vanier in the first L'Arche community in 1960.

Sabbath time is a period of repose when the mind settles gently in the heart. *Who is it that can make muddy water clear?* asks Tao Te Ching. *If allowed to remain still, it will gradually become clear of itself.* The invitation to rest is rooted in an undeniable spiritual gravity that allows all things at rest to settle, to find their place.

-Wayne Muller