

## SUMMERTIME



Summertime, time for vacation, for outdoor activities from barbecues to beaches, for relaxation and relationships. How fortunate we are to live on an island with bay and ocean beaches within traveling distance.

The world has become surreal, chaotic– lives are determined by clocks and calendars. All year long you lead a busy, very busy, life. Might summertime be a time to get in touch with yourself? Slow down; look into your own heart. How about a change of pace this

summer, a time to grow in relationships, time for yourself, for those you love, for God.

“Waste” a little time on yourself. Become more consciously aware of your needs. Do whatever it takes to draw you into touch with your best self, the self God made you to be. Sit quietly on your front porch, in your backyard, or a local park. Breathe deeply. Read a little, rest a bit, talk to God whose love surrounds you and to the Spirit who dwells in your heart. Get in touch with your deepest hopes and desires. Take walks in the cooler air of morning or evening. Appreciate the beauty of nature all around you.

It is important to dedicate time to those who love you most, those who are always there for you – your family, close friends. Too often we take those closest to us for granted. How about speaking to your spouse and your children, tell them how much they mean to you, how much you love them. Give them a big hug, encourage them. A little love goes a long way. Do things together this summer. Swim, play with your kids, your grandchildren, enjoy sports. Enjoying each other strengthens family bonds and creates memories that last for a lifetime.

Let the spirit of summer fill you. May it open your eyes that you might see God present all around you wherever you are. May it open your ears that you may hear what God is saying to you through others. May it inundate your heart and transform you. Then you will grow in what Pope Francis calls *spiritual attitudes*: greater patience, joy and a sense of humor, a stronger desire to talk with God in prayer and the strength to face the inevitable conflicts in life throughout the year. What a wonderful experience this could be! Happy Summer!



*Sr. Barbara O’Dea, DW*