

## **Sabbath Spiritual Practice**

### **July 15-21**

In these last few weeks, we explore closing practices for your Sabbath day. In the Jewish tradition, Sabbath begins with the blessing of children. As we are used to receiving a blessing in the liturgy before our dismissal, it is appropriate to end our personal Sabbath this way. Blessing with its physical touch and special prayer for each person connects us to the experience of God's grace during Sabbath time. Blessing sends us back into ordinary time with a tangible memory of God's continuous bestowal of blessing.

Blessing combines meaningful touch and spoken prayer. A hand or both hands may be placed on a shoulder or the head of the recipient. Jesus often reached out his hands to touch people before he spoke words of healing. The words of a blessing prayer communicate love, acceptance, praise and special wishes for the person being blessed. The words can be short and simple: "May God bless you in the coming week." Phrases can be added to address personal concerns: "May you be filled with peace in the challenges ahead this week" or "may angels guard you as you travel" or other specific messages for health and well-being.