

Scripture Reading

A Reading from the Gospel according to John (*John 20:19-23*)

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" After He said this, He showed them His hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord. Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent Me, I am sending you." And with that He breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone's sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven." The Gospel of the Lord. R. Praise to You Lord Jesus Christ.

Reflection – The Holy Spirit has been Given to Me. I have been Sent.

True peace is from God. After His resurrection our Lord always greeted His disciples with: Peace be with You! It was only after reconciliation of sinners with God the Father was brought about by the Precious Blood of Jesus shed on the cross that true peace can descend into human hearts. Jesus repeated the greeting twice before announcing to His disciples that He was sending them to announce the Good News - the Good News that there is a God who cares so much that to redeem every single person He sacrificed His only Son as propitiation for our sins, the Good News that God has prepared an eternal life of joy and peace for us after our short stay on earth, the Good News that God is always with us and is always available to listen to us and to help us in any need, loving us more than the most tender of mothers (cf. Isaiah 49:15).

Peace in our hearts helps us announce the Good News. Peace is a fruit of the Holy Spirit which has been given to us. Many times our peace is shaken by the trials and difficulties in our lives. The Lord restores it especially through our prayers and the order of our living. Prayer opens up our hearts to God, puts us in touch with His love and sources of divine grace. Without prayer, we cannot grow in faith but instead will lose it eventually. Jesus says: "*Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.*" (*Matthew 26:41*). Correct order of living our life is a first step to lasting peace. *Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well* (*Matthew 6:33*). It means to set aside our attachments to all earthly things that oppose our salvation: our pride, our fears, our passions, our material wealth, our appearance, our health, our reputation, the opinion and acceptance of others, attachment to other people and all the things that control us. In setting aside our earthly attachments, we unburden our hearts and free ourselves to pick up our cross and follow Jesus more faithfully.

Believing in the power of the Holy Spirit. It is amazing how a small band of uneducated fishermen can change the face of the world. The Lord could have chosen His apostles from among the many highly educated, intelligent and powerful scribes and Pharisees of the Jewish people, but significantly, He did not. God does not need to depend on human power. He is already almighty. What He needs are hearts that truly love Him, that have the generosity of spirit to walk in His footsteps. The Lord says to us as He said to St. Paul: *My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is made perfect in weakness.* " (*2 Corinthians 12:9*). It is the power of God's Spirit that brings about the creation of the entire universe, the Incarnation of Christ in the womb of Mary and the miraculous resurrection of Jesus from the dead. It is the same Spirit given to us and residing in us now. St. Paul reminds us: *I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know... His incomparably great power for us who believe...* (*Ephesians 1:18-19*).

Conversation with Jesus

Precious Lord, thank You for Your gift of the Holy Spirit – the Spirit of the Father and the Son – not a spirit of timidity but one of power and love (cf. 2 Timothy 1:7). When I was baptised I was called to share in Your ministry as priest, prophet and king; to expand Your kingdom on earth and win many hearts for You. Though I am full of human weaknesses You remind me that Your grace is sufficient for me and that I possess the power of the Truth. Lord of love, allow me to feel the love You hold in Your heart for me and let the flame of Your love flood my soul. I unite my heart with Yours and desire ardently too that all hearts be turned towards You and that Your Word of love and Your wonderful promise of eternal life of peace and joy be made known to every poor restless creature searching and thirsty for true love. I offer You my heart with all its merits and iniquities, and my will. Go before me and show me the way forward to be Your eyes, mouth, hands and feet. Mary, Mother of Salvation, pray for me. Thank You Jesus. Praise You Jesus.