

WASH YOURSELVES CLEAN!
PUT AWAY YOUR MISDEEDS FROM BEFORE MY
EYES' CEASE DOING EVIL; LEARN TO BE GOOD.

Sixth Sunday
of Easter

Peace

San Ignacio de Loyola Parish

May 10, 2015

REFLECTION ON THE WORD

"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you, not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid."

John 14: 27-31

In his farewell discourse Jesus grants peace as his gift to his disciples. What kind of peace does he offer? The peace of Christ is more than the absence of trouble. The world's approach to peace is avoidance of trouble and a refusal to face unpleasant things. Jesus offers the peace which conquers our



fears and anxieties. Nothing can take us from the peace and joy of Jesus Christ. No sorrow or grief, no danger, no suffering can make it less. Do you live in the peace of Jesus Christ? What is this peace? What does it consist of?

**Words to reflect upon:
what is this Peace of Jesus Christ?**

Constructing Peace

We now live in a truly noxious environment in Puerto Rico. Our culture instills bias and glorifies violence to an ever-increasing degree. We are increasingly **suspicious** of too many things and too many people. We **fear** too many things and too many people. We **hate** too much.

As a result, over the last few decades, our social pathology in Puerto Rico has become ever more severe, more complex and multidimensional and increasingly more difficult to treat.

Yet, we don't want to live this way, to be this way. We desperately want **peace**. Fr. Vega tells us that **peace** is one of the gifts of **Easter** and so we already possess it but still we storm heaven: "Lord, send us your **peace!**" We wonder why he doesn't answer.

How many of us have considered that it may be up to US, each of us as individuals, to make use of our **Easter gift** of **peace**, to begin the work of constructing that **peace**? Could we be in part responsible for the situation we deplore because of our inaction, our apathy, for not activating this **Easter gift** or accepting personal responsibility for dealing with the problem?

Certainly we have largely forgotten how to **make peace**. We no longer are known for our harmony as a people. We are even in danger of losing much of our traditional high level of tolerance of each other's idiosyncrasies, foibles and weaknesses. We don't seem to know what to do, where to start.

But WE HAVE TO DO SOMETHING! WE CAN DO SOMETHING! All we *have to do is decide to do the work of* **constructing peace**. It is not up to the government, or the church or the police or the school to do this most important foundational work. If the work of **constructing peace** is to take root in our lives, we will have to start first as individuals, then as family groups, then as neighbors and then finally as parts of a larger society. Are you willing to believe that **peace is a possibility**? Then work for it!

The work is especially important now in the situations we are living in Puerto Rico. The next few bulletins will be **PEACE BULLETINS** dedicated to helping us walk together on the same mission as Christ did: "(Jesus) said to them, Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you" (John 20:21). And may The Holy Spirit be with us on the journey!

Pope Francis' Teachings on Peace

"Peace is a gift that comes through prayer and through small daily efforts to sow harmony in one's family, parish and community. We are all called to reignite in our hearts a spark of hope which must be translated into concrete works of peace: You don't get along with that person? Make peace! In your home? Make peace! In the community? Make peace! At work?

Make peace! Peace is not just an absence of war, but the general condition of the person who is in harmony with himself or herself, in harmony with nature and in harmony with others.

Peace is possible with faith. Faith helps make people free, and living the tenets of faith helps make them peacemakers. Thanks to our baptism, we were introduced into communion with God and we are no longer at the whim of evil and sin, but we receive the love, tenderness and mercy of the heavenly Father."

prayer for peace —

Lord, may your peace be always with me.
You, alone, O Lord, are my Peace.
May I always reside in that peace
by believing your word and
doing your will.

First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people,
1 Timothy 2:1

Let us pray together today for the chronically ill: Sylvia Tasner, Albert and Jerry Vega, Fr. Vega, Rudy & Sonia Méndez, Maggie Maziarz and Peter and Leida Fiorito.

*please
pray for
the sick*

Let us join our hearts in prayer this week for peace in Puerto Rico. May the Good God open our minds and strengthen our hearts that we may each work in our own way for the cessation of all violence—in our streets, in our families, and in our hearts.

Knowing that we are infinitely loved by God, we try to let Jesus be the way, the truth and the life for us. This means we are invited to be like him, people of universal love, boundless compassion and infinite peace. How're we doing so far?

Peace as a Possibility

"Violence as a way of achieving justice is both impractical and immoral. It is impractical because it is a descending spiral ending in destruction for all. The old law of an eye for an eye leaves everybody blind. It is immoral because it seeks to humiliate the opponent rather than win his understanding; it seeks to annihilate rather than to convert. Violence is immoral because it thrives on hatred rather than love. It destroys community and makes brotherhood impossible. It leaves society in monologue rather than dialogue. Violence ends by defeating itself. It creates bitterness in the survivors and brutality in the destroyers."

— Martin Luther King, Nobel Peace Prize address, Oslo 1964

These thoughts from a martyred peace-maker ring true today as we struggle to make sense of the violence and the confusion that surround us. King's words also show us the answers. We must try to understand the person who thinks differently than we do. We must practice love and resist hating—an important consideration for seeing the world around us as it really is and reacting as Jesus taught.

*Peace is Possible! Peace is Possible! Peace is Possible!
Peace is Possible! Peace is Possible! Peace is Possible!*

PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE

THE PSALMS OF PEACE

Psalm 34: "Come children, listen to me. I will teach you awe for the God of Peace. Who among you loves life, takes delight in prosperous days?"

Keep your tongue from evil, your lips from speaking lies. Turn from evil and do good. Seek peace and pursue it."

Psalm 34 is a guide to the God of Peace and the way of nonviolence. It can be a guide for us through the *doorway to peace. The psalm is a poem, its life-changing wisdom a path to peace and the God of Peace. It reads as a hymn of praise, a guide to daily living, an invitation to wisdom and a testimony to God's liberation of the poor and oppressed.*

Fr. John Dear

**Peace is not the absence of pain —
but the presence of order,
everything directed toward God.**