

LOOKING AT LIFE THROUGH THE LENS OF THE GOSPEL

"My Father
will love them,
and we will
come to them and
make our home
with them"

Rathfarnham Lectio Divina Group

Please join us on
Thursday 7.30 pm
in the Parish Centre to
reflect on the Gospel
of the week.

6th Sunday of Easter
May 25th 2025

John 14:22 Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, "Lord, how is it that you will reveal yourself to us, and not to the world?" ²³ Jesus answered him, "Those who love me will keep my word, and my Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. ²⁴ Whoever does not love me does not keep my words; and the word that you hear is not mine, but is from the Father who sent me.

John 14:25 "I have said these things to you while I am still with you. ²⁶ But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you. ²⁷ Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid. ²⁸ You heard me say to you, 'I am going away, and I am coming to you.' If you loved me, you would rejoice that I am going to the Father, because the Father is greater than I. ²⁹ And now I have told you this before it occurs, so that when it does occur, you may believe.

PREPARING FOR PENTECOST

We continue to read the words of Jesus to the disciples at the last supper and these are appropriate now as we draw near to the feast of Pentecost and the giving of the Spirit. At the beginning of the text we find a favourite theme of John which is that of God dwelling in the disciple, making his home within each one. This means that the Jerusalem temple, beautiful as it was, has no longer any importance, because God has chosen to live in the heart of the believer. John uses the word Advocate, or Paraclete to describe the Holy Spirit and, in so doing, he is reminding us that the work of the Spirit is twofold.

On the one hand, the spirit is with us as our lawyer or defence counsel against an unbelieving world while, on the other, he is our teacher, who brings to light all that Jesus has said, leading us to an understanding of Jesus' words and the truth that God does indeed dwell within.

SEAN GOAN—Let the Reader Understand, Year C

OLD TESTAMENT BACKGROUND

- (i) In the Old Testament, God's Holy Spirit is present in creation, inspires prophets and imparts the gift of Wisdom. This Gospel adds to these functions the roles of "advocacy" (Paraclete = advocate) and "reminding."
- (ii) Peace or shalom enjoys a high profile in the Old Testament with a distinctive range of meanings: physical well-being, fertility in family and crops, good relations with others. See Psalm 122.
- (iii) One of the most common phrases across the whole bible is "do not be afraid". This is said to everyone who has an encounter with the transcendent. The Johannine form of this is "Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid."

Thought for the day

There is a move afoot to replace church teaching on the just war with a more proactive doctrine of just peace. As Paul VI observed long ago, peace is much more than the absence of war. In a world riven by conflict, peace is a matter of discipleship and, at the personal level, a matter of deliberate choice even in the everyday conflicts of our ordinary lives. The prayer for peace goes well beyond praying for individualistic freedom from stress.

Prayer

O God, though the human race is divided by dissension and discord, yet we know that by testing us you change our hearts to prepare them for reconciliation. Even more, by your Spirit you move human hearts that enemies may speak to each other again, adversaries may join hands, and peoples seek to meet together. Amen.

KIERAN O'MAHONY—tarsus.ie

A special atmosphere surrounds this final discourse. The disciples are afraid of being left without the Master. Jesus, however, insists that despite his departure they will never feel his absence.

The scenario he opens up for the disciples is magnificent. A great spiritual movement of disciples will be born of Jesus and will follow him supported by the Holy Spirit. They will persevere in his truth because the Spirit will keep teaching them everything that he has communicated to them along the roads of Galilee. He will be with them in the future when faced with the challenges and temptations to give in to fear.

He also gives them his peace. If they are guided by the Spirit, as they remember and keep his words, they will experience peace.

When the church is being discredited and embarrassed in these difficult times, it would be a serious mistake to try to defend our credibility and moral authority by acting without the Spirit of truth promised by Jesus. Fear will keep infiltrating Christianity if we seek to base our security and our peace by means incompatible with the way shown by him.

When the church loses its peace, it is not possible to recover it through just any means or strategy. It is not possible to bring in the peace of Christ while our hearts are full of resentment and blindness. We need humbly to be converted to his truth, to mobilise all our forces in order to retrace our steps from false ways, and to allow ourselves to be guided by the Spirit that inspired the whole life of Jesus

JOSÉ A PAGOLA—Following in the Footsteps of Jesus, Year C

POINTERS FOR PRAYER

1. Jesus seeks to reassure his followers in the face of his imminent death. Although he will be leaving them he promises them the gift of the Spirit. How have you been aware of the gift of the Spirit of God in your life?
2. Remember times of separation from a loved one, through change of residence or other circumstances. How has the love between you been a support after the separation?
3. To his followers Jesus promises 'we will come and make our home with them'. Our God is not a distant God but one who lives in us. What has helped you to be aware of the closeness of God to you?
4. 'Do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid'. When you have been anxious, who have been the Jesus people for you who were able to calm your anxiety. How did they do this? For whom have you been one who calmed anxiety?

JOHN BYRNE— Recently Deceased pray for him

SCRIPTURE PRAYERS

Lord, we could know all the teachings of Jesus by heart, but if we don't have a personal relationship with him we will not keep them.

"If you desire peace, prepare for war." Roman proverb
Lord, the great powers can never bring peace to the world because they want to impose it by force, whereas, as Jesus taught, we cannot impose peace, we can only share the peace that we have ourselves as a gift that others are free to take or leave.

Lord, people have taught us facts and skills, but there have been a few special people who have been like Jesus for us in that they shared with us how they coped with life, and their courage, their perseverance is like a precious inheritance which we can build on in our own lives.

Lord, we thank you for the faith that enables us to let our loved ones go, so that we can take leave of them saying to ourselves, in the midst of our sorrow, that since we love them we are glad to know that they are going to you, their Father in heaven.

MICHEL DE VERTEUIL—Lectio Divina on the Sunday

"When we understand the essential unity of all that is, we discover the possibility of 'peace' - the kind of peace that in Hebrew is called *Shalom*, which is infinitely more than the absence of strife; it is the wholeness of the web of life itself and of every creature in it, held in the wholeness of the one God." (Margaret Silf)

Do you overconsume? Impulse buying is something we all do from time to time. When shopping, try to do so with greater awareness: Do I really need this item? Where was it made? Will it really bring me the peace I am searching for?

*Create space for meditation this week, beginning with five minutes each day. Focus on your breath. Use the mantra **Shalom**. As you inhale silently say 'Sha-' and as you exhale 'lom'. Bring awareness into your heart and visualise Christ seated there. **Shalom**. Try to bring this into your daily spiritual practice.*

TRÍONA DOHERTY & JANE MELLETT —Go Deeper