



AMDG
SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER
YEAR C
26TH MAY 2019



**My peace I give unto you;
let not your heart be troubled,
neither let it be afraid**

OPENING PRAYER

Grant, almighty God,
that we may celebrate with heartfelt devotion these days of joy,
which we keep in honour of the risen Lord,
and that what we relive in remembrance
we may always hold to in what we do.

As we progress through Eastertide, the readings turn towards the promise of the coming of the Holy Spirit.

In the *First Reading* we see its influence on the discussions to resolve the conflict between the early Christians during the Council of Jerusalem.

The *Second Reading* from the Book of Revelation describes the heavenly Jerusalem with the Lord and the Lamb in its midst, fulfilling all the hopes of Israel.

The *Psalms* is a song of thanksgiving for the blessings the Lord has given us.

In the *Gospel*, Jesus promises that he, together with the Father, will come to dwell in all those who keep his word, and announces the coming of the Spirit. He bestows on us his gift of peace, bringing us comfort and reassurance.

This week, we might want to pray for all those who do not accept the Word of God, or who do not know it in all its forms in their life. We may also ask that the love we feel for the Lord shows itself in loving deeds in our everyday life.

FIRST READING ACTS 15: 1–2, 22–29

Some men came down from Judaea and taught the brothers, ‘Unless you have yourselves circumcised in the tradition of Moses you cannot be saved.’ This led to disagreement, and after Paul and Barnabas had had a long argument with these men it was arranged that they and others of the church should go up to Jerusalem and discuss the problem with the apostles and elders. Then the apostles and elders decided to choose delegates to send to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas ... and gave them this letter to take with them:

‘The apostles and elders, your brothers, send greetings to the brothers of pagan birth in Antioch, Syria and Cilicia. We hear that some of our members have disturbed you with their demands and have unsettled your minds. They acted without any authority from us, and so we have decided unanimously to elect delegates and to send them to you with Barnabas and Paul, men we highly respect who have dedicated their lives to the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Accordingly we are sending you Judas and Silas, who will confirm by word of mouth what we have written in this letter. It has been decided by the Holy Spirit and by ourselves not to saddle you with any burden beyond these essentials: you are to abstain from food sacrificed to idols; from blood from the meat of strangled animals; and from fornication. Avoid these, and you will do what is right. Farewell.’

As I come to my place of prayer, I reflect on my frame of mind. How am I feeling? I take a deep breath and ask the Holy Spirit to be with me.

After a few moments, I pick up the text and read it slowly, perhaps several times. ‘What are you saying to me today, Lord?’

I may want to reflect on the strife between the two communities (Jewish and Gentile Christians) and the way the apostles attempt to resolve it.

I consider how they listen to each other and come to a conclusion with the help of the Holy Spirit.

How do I resolve the conflicts I encounter in my own life?

How far does the Church follow the apostles’ example?

How does this make me feel?

Perhaps I am drawn to reflect on clashes in the world and the suffering they bring. I may pray that these quarrels are healed through listening to one another’s point of view, and through speaking words of reconciliation and compromise.

I conclude my prayer by asking the Lord for what I need just now, and by giving thanks for his loving presence with me today.

GOSPEL JOHN 14: 23–29

Jesus said to his disciples:
'If anyone loves me he will keep my word,
and my Father will love him,
and we shall come to him and make our home with him.
Those who do not love me do not keep my words.
And my word is not my own:
it is the word of the one who sent me.
I have said these things to you while still with you;
but the Advocate, the Holy Spirit,
whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything and
remind you of all I have said to you.
Peace I bequeath to you, my own peace I give you,
a peace the world cannot give, this is my gift to you.
Do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid. You heard me say:
I am going away, and shall return.
If you loved me you would have been glad to know
that I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I.
I have told you this now before it happens,
so that when it does happen you may believe.'

After coming to some inner quiet in the way I know works best for me,
I read today's Gospel slowly and prayerfully.

The text lends itself to being broken down into short sections.
I may find it easier to stop and ponder after each one, asking myself:
'What does this mean for me? How does it apply to my own life?'

St Ignatius encourages us to ponder short phrases of Scripture and mull them
over as we would a boiled sweet. With this in mind, I may find myself reflecting
on the Lord's 'word'. What does this mean for me?

Is it only the words that came from his lips, or is it also his actions, his
relationships ... or even the whole of creation ...?

In what ways do I keep his word and show others my love for the Lord?
I spend time telling the Lord what is in my heart, and asking for his help.

Perhaps I find the lines concerning his gift of peace to me comforting and
reassuring. Once again I stop and consider whether my own life reflects the
peace and love the Lord has given me.

I pray for all those who never experience this calm and peace, or who refuse to
accept his love.

In time, I thank the Lord in my own words for the insights he has given me
during this prayer, and conclude with a '*Glory be ...*'

Here's a text if you've only got a minute ...

It has been decided by the Holy Spirit and by ourselves not to saddle you with any burden beyond essentials.

First Reading

If you love me, keep my commandments, says the Lord, and I will ask the Father and he will send you another Paraclete, to abide with you for ever, alleluia.

Communion Antiphon (John 14:15-16)

Peace I bequeath to you, my own peace I give you, a peace the world cannot give, this is my gift to you. Do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid.

Gospel

*This week's texts if you want to reflect further
Acts 15: 1-2, 22-29; Ps. 66 (67); Apoc. 21: 10-14, 22-23; John 14: 23-29*



'My peace I give you'



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