

## Sixth Sunday of Easter

Year C

Acts 15:1-2, 22-29  
Ps 67:2-3, 5, 6, 8  
Rev 21:10-14, 22-23  
Jn 14:23-29

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The final wishes or words of a loved one nearing death have a way of remaining with us. As a priest, I can think of various occasions where I have had the privilege of being with parishioners and/or family members as they saw a loved one prepare to go home to God. Powerful words between the dying and the living are so often exchanged at moments like this.

The setting of today's Gospel is the night before Jesus' own suffering and death.

It is a continuation of the Last Supper discourse from which the Gospel of last Sunday was also taken. The reading is given to us in the Easter season as a reminder that the promises of God to his people have been fulfilled. Jesus has returned to the Father and the Holy Spirit has been sent to guide all people to truth. Jesus' farewell gift and wish for his disciples is a message of peace. "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you." Pondering these words, I found myself asking: what is peace and where does it come from?

Peace could mean different things to different people. For someone suffering from arthritis, one or two hours without pain could be peace. For students and teachers, anticipating the end of classes and exams in the next several weeks might bring a sense of peace! Thoughts of an end to war and violence can bring peace. Yet none of these images seem to fully capture or describe the peace of which Jesus speaks.

As Jesus prepared to return to the Father, he was at peace knowing he had accomplished the mission for which he was sent. He teaches us that peace comes from both being faithful and in letting go. Peace is an inner reality. It is about recognizing God's presence in and around us, made possible by the gift of the Holy Spirit. "Whoever loves me will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our dwelling with him." Imagine Jesus wanting to make his dwelling in the likes of us! And yet the words of Jesus offer us hope. When we allow ourselves to be led by the Spirit, we discover peace. When we make good choices, we experience peace.

Today, we are invited to experience the gift of peace, which comes to us in both the Word we have heard and in the Eucharist we will receive. It seems appropriate today to pray for peace; peace in our hearts, homes, and in the world. We also honor on this Mother's Day all of our mothers, who are entrusted with creating an environment of peace and love in family life. May God's blessing be with all our mothers, both living and deceased.