



Wednesday Prayer

Second Sunday of Easter – Allow Peace

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit.”

John 20:19-22

Jesus appears to the disciples, who have locked themselves in due to fear, offering peace and the gifts of the Spirit. We, as busy and fear-filled people, have to work hard to allow ourselves peace. Our culture often fights against stillness and calm, instead measuring productivity and action as core values to strive toward. And much of our media uses fear as a means of persuasion to get us to believe or act in a certain way. Jesus' example to the disciples was one of balancing action – preaching and healing – with solitude and rest.

A new focus in the work to prevent exploitation and trafficking, and in the work of advocates daily accompanying survivors on their journeys, is to pay attention to self-care practices and to allow ourselves solitude and rest. This does not come easy, as there is always more to do in a day than hours available, and the needs of those we serve are so great. But Jesus experienced the constant needs of the people in his ministry here on earth as well. He took time away to pray and to rest. Time for peace and time to receive the Holy Spirit.

I think some young people today have a better handle on this than many of us adults. Yes, some are over-scheduled with sports, music, school, and all the other things. But it seems more and more are recognizing the need for solitude and peace, replacing “fomo” (fear of missing out) with “jomo” – the joy of missing out. I think of introverts who've felt they needed to act more social than they were comfortable with, who now may prefer social interaction online more. As adults, we can support the young people in our lives by finding out what gaming and social media apps they enjoy, who they interact with, helping them understand the potential dangers, and being available to support them if something gets uncomfortable or dangerous. And yes, also encouraging them to join with others who are safe, supportive and accepting as a part of their development into healthy relationships both online and in-person.

“Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you, the kind of peace the world cannot give.”

John 14:27

Written by Joy McElroy, Cherish All Children Executive Director.

*Join us April 21 at Valley of Peace Lutheran Church for [*Sing, My Soul: Love in Heaven and the Sky*](#) offered by Caritas Vocal Ensemble. A free-will offering supports Cherish All Children.