

Greetings to you!!!

The theme for our morning's meditation is, "Joy and peace, power and new life are given through the Resurrection of Christ." On the evening of the first day of the week most probably in the upper room, the doors were locked because of the fear of the Jews. The disciples gathered were depressed and disillusioned because of the death of Christ. They thought that they have come to the end of the road despite Jesus reminding them on numerous occasions that he had to suffer and die and then rise again on the third day. Everything changed with the resurrection of Jesus. From not knowing what to do and where to go they were transformed into a people with a plan and a purpose.

Jesus appeared to them in the upper room saying, "Peace be with you." He then shows them his hands and his side. There is some continuity and discontinuity in the physical realm of Jesus' body. The scars on his hands and sides are shown. John does not mention his feet, but at the same time Jesus could walk through closed doors. We see something of the resurrected body here. The disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. Their disappointment and fears had now turned to joy and celebration. Boldness, love and joy are not just private experiences; they have to be the mark of the community of faith.

The resurrection of Jesus also brings about peace. Peace with God because the work of salvation has been done on the cross. Jesus has paved the way for us to enter into God's presence because he took our place on the cross. The curtain in the holy of holies was rent in two to indicate that we have direct access to the Father through the righteousness of Jesus. Twice in this short section Jesus says to his disciples, "Peace be with you!" The disciples may have been anxious about what Jesus was going to tell them because they deserted him on Good Friday. However, Jesus offered them peace. He further sent them on a ministry of reconciliation saying, "As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." The Father was reconciling the world to himself through Jesus. Jesus was now sending out his disciples to be his ambassadors and carry out this ministry of reconciliation.

We also see the power of the resurrection being made available to all those who believe in Jesus Christ. Fifty days after the resurrection of Jesus, on the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came upon all the believers. Paul writing to the Ephesians prays that the eyes of the believers would be enlightened so that they may be aware of the riches of his glorious inheritance and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the power which he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms (Ephesians 1:18-20).

The church is the new Spirit breathed community and is sent into the world to preach the Kingdom of God, to help the poor, to bring healing to the disabled and to suffer and die for the vindication of truth and justice. The Holy Spirit also gives the power to enable the community of the risen Christ to be a community of forgiveness. By forgiving the sins of others the church is to bring the reconciliation in a society torn by broken relationships. The forgiveness that is brought about is by the preaching of the Gospel. If we preach it then we will be forgiven, if we don't then people continue to remain in their sins.

Finally, we see that the new life is available to all who believe in Christ. In John's gospel Jesus says that unless one is born of the Spirit that person cannot experience the life of the Kingdom of God (John 3:3, 5, 8). It is necessary for each individual to receive new birth by faith to live in communion with God. As we are in this Easter Season may we truly be filled with joy and celebrate his resurrection, being assured of peace with God and enjoying the new life he offers.