



THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER 18 April, 2021

Peace is the state
when we understand
one another as gift.
When we welcome one another
and treasure one another.

—Rowan Williams

Opening Sentences

We are people of resilience and strength
with stories to share of endurance and flourishing.

I come to give thanks.

We are people of tenderness and vulnerability
bearing the cracks and scars of life.

I come to grow in compassion.

Let us open our hearts before God
whose great love was made known in Jesus,
whose Spirit is with us now.

I come to be enfolded in Christ.

Opening Prayer—by Noel Davis

*Come Holy Spirit
Come.*

Dear God of Passion
We pray with passion
for Your help to let go
and let ourselves be re-created
in Your Spirit
the Spirit of Light and Love
Fire and Imagination.

We pray to You
in steadfast confidence and trust
knowing You will answer us.
Help us to keep our prayer
the focus of our day
so that the power of our intention
to choose always the good
translates into reality.

ENCOUNTERING THE LIVING WORD

Gospel Reading—Luke 24:36b–48

While Cleopas and his companion were talking with the others about their experience on the road to Emmaus, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you."

They were startled and terrified, and thought that they were seeing a spirit. Jesus said to them, "Why are you frightened, and why do debates arise in your hearts? Look at my hands and my feet; see that it is I myself. Touch me and see; for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have." And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet.

While in their joy they were disbelieving and still wondering, Jesus said to them, "Have you anything here to eat?" They gave him a piece of broiled fish, and he took it and ate in their presence. Then he said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled." Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and he said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things."

May your word live in us
and bear much fruit to your glory.

As-salam laykum—"Peace be with you." A post-resurrection Jesus stands among the disciples and offers a traditional middle eastern greeting. Peace is both a grace of the Christian life and it is our shared mission as Christian community.

- How is Jesus' offering of peace a grace to you at this time?
- How do you see St. Andrew's living its mission of peace? In what ways do you participate in this ministry?

In showing his hands and feet to his disciples, Jesus reminds us of *the way and cost* of peace. Jesus taught by example that hate is not conquered with more hate. True peace does not come about through violence. Hostilities cannot be disarmed with oppression and coercion. Hurt and resentment are not quelled with more hurt or through withdrawal and suppression as is often our convenient response.

- When have you been a peace maker?
- What was this experience like for you? What was the cost to you?

Reflection

You might wish to read the written reflection on Luke 24 at this point.

RESPONDING WITH OUR LIVES

Prayers of the People

*(This prayer seeks to hold the tension of life, recognising a non-dualism—
not either/or but both/and—by bringing a fulness of reality to God in prayer.)*

You who created all things and called them good:

We pray for the families and communities who are in recovery after devastating floods, earth quakes, cyclones and high winds that destroyed homes, towns and livestock. And we join our voices with creation as she cries out for balance and simplicity, the chance to co-exist on this good earth. Remove greed from our hearts and short-sightedness from our thinking. Give us courage and the will to embrace needed change.

Healer of the blind and the lame:

We pray for leaders who are guiding Australia's COVID recovery and give thanks for the increasing freedom from fear and disease we experience. And we pray for places around the world where third and fourth waves of outbreak continue to cause suffering, death, isolation and despair. Open our hearts to the global community. Increase our compassion and generosity. Help us find creative ways to love and care for our neighbours in the world.

Bringer of peace and justice:

We pray for those who are mourning. For the family and friends of Prince Philip whose longevity and notoriety leave behind a fulness of relationships and memories. And we also pray for the family and friends of Barkindji man Anzac Sullivan and the hundreds of other aboriginal women and men who died alone while in custody. Comfort all with your eternal love and help us work with our indigenous sisters and brothers to end the continued injustice of colonialism that is a scourge on this country.

Finally, dear God, we pray for those we love—our friends and family members who abide in our hearts. And we pray for our enemies, those we hold at arm's length—those who annoy or upset us, those with whom we disagree or whose ways we find difficult to understand, those who frighten or disturb us. Heal our wounds and help us to forgive. Enable us to open our hearts to wider horizons where you go before us, ready to make real your love and peace.

Disciples' Prayer

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.

Song

“God make me a channel”

Words and music: Richard Bruxvoort Colligan

God, make me a channel of your peace flowing from your river
God, make me a channel of your peace flowing from your river

Where there is hate, we plant love
Where there is hurt, forgiveness
Where there is doubt, we plant faith
And where despair, hopefulness

Blessing

Christ has no body but yours,
no hands, no feet on earth but yours.
Yours are the eyes with which Christ looks compassion on this world,
the feet with which Christ walks to do good,
the hands with which Christ blesses the world.

—St. Teresa of Avila