



ALL SAINTS' CHURCH

"Our mission is to bring the good news of Jesus Christ's love to our entire community through traditional Anglo-Catholic worship, fellowship, outreach, and Christian formation."

Our Vision: *"We strive to be a haven of healing, reconciliation, joy and peace in service to our wider community and beyond, so that our example in prayer and practice may reflect Christ's love for us all."*

THIS SUNDAY June 28 & BEYOND

What Is Wrong with 'Peace'?



Hearing Jesus say that He had not come to bring peace but a sword must have been unsettling to His followers. After all, the Jewish *Shalom* (the term which was translated as *peace* in the New Testament Greek) was a word that meant not only absence of conflict, but all the good things that could be expected in God's Reign. And Jesus was not known as one to promote revolts or armed conflicts.

So, what did Jesus mean?

It is interesting to note that there are instances in which The New Testament refers to peace in a distinct way. In John 14:27 we read that Jesus says to His disciples, "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives."

The Apostle Paul, in turn, refers to peace in his letter to the Philippians in these words, "The Peace of God, which surpasses all understanding..."

This makes us perceive that there is a distinct way to think of peace in God's Reign that may not correspond to what the world normally thinks of as peace. In fact, the Roman Empire under whose rule the Jews lived in times of Jesus was famous for its maintenance of 'peace' for all those who accepted their rule. They even committed to defend those territories who were part of the Empire and grant them the Roman 'peace'.

When 'peace' has to do with the keeping of the status quo, whether in the household, in the neighborhood, the city, the nation or the world, it is mainly perceived as the submission to those factors that keep everything as it has been, so that there is no conflict among the different parties. This is what the scribes and interpreters of the Law had been trying to do in Jesus' time. Deep inside, they rejected and despised the injustice of the Roman occupation, but they concluded it was better to submit to it and enjoy a certain degree of 'peace'.

Jesus' radical Way of Love could not fail to bring about conflict with the status quo. Unconditional love leaves no place for injustice or unequal treatment. It goes far beyond that though. It proclaims forgiveness even for the enemy, and the inclusion of all peoples in God's salvific plan. These ideas would not be accepted by the established Judaism of Jesus' time. There would be conflict with those in the household. Families would be divided. Those who wanted to follow Jesus' Way of Love would have to make a radical and hard choice.

But the hardest conflict would be with the old self. Leaving the old self behind felt like giving up life itself. But as Paul points out in his letter to the Romans, we have died Jesus' death so that we can be raised to Jesus' resurrected life. Unless we let the old self die there can be no true resurrected life in us. The cross needs to be embraced so we can gain true life.

Jesus' Way of Love is also the Way of the Cross. Conflict will not leave us until we have overcome the world, as Jesus has. Moreover, it will not leave us until we have conquered our old self. But there is a Peace that surpasses all understanding, Jesus' Peace, the one that He gave His followers even after His resurrection. He will give it to us too if we ask Him. And then, His words will resound deep in us, 'trouble not your hearts; be not afraid'.

Fr. Carlos E. Expósito, Rector

Readings for this Sunday – The Fourth Sunday after Pentecost

Isaiah 2:10-17 Psalm 89:1-4, 15-18 Romans 6:3-11 Matthew 10:34-4

CALENDAR

SUNDAY: The Fourth Sunday after Pentecost
9:00am Solemn Mass (Church Courtyard)

TUESDAY Noon Service
Join Zoom Meeting from our web site at www.allsaintschurch.org

FRIDAY Christian Formation Study at noon
Join Zoom Meeting from our web site at www.allsaintschurch.org

SATURDAY Societies of Mary Day of Devotion Rescheduled to Saturday, July 11

SUNDAY The Fifth Sunday after Pentecost
9:00am Solemn Mass (Church Courtyard)