

John 20:19-31  
April 15, 2012

*May the words of my mouth and the meditation of our hearts, be always acceptable to you oh Lord, Our Strength and Our Redeemer. Amen*

In today's Gospel we hear that the disciples are gathered together in a room behind a locked door,

One can only imagine what the disciples are feeling, thinking, and experiencing huddled behind that door in fear

They are likely trying to digest and understand all that has happened

The arrest, the trial, and the crucifixion

It's a lot to take in, a lot to ponder.

Replaying the events of the past few days and the past three years, over and over in their minds,

Questioning themselves, and their actions, after all they deserted Jesus and some even Denied that they knew him.

Perhaps the disciples didn't lock the door because they were afraid of those who crucified Jesus, but maybe they were locking themselves in.

All of us, at one time or another, has been faced with fear, anxieties, uncertainty, and regrets

And when we experience these things, we tend to lock it inside of ourselves, isolating ourselves.

Like the disciples, we try and hide from our shame.

Yet the midst of the disciples fear, anxiety and shame, the Risen Lord comes to them through that locked door and stands among them

He meets them where they are, saying these familiar words “Peace be with you”

“Peace” or “Shalom” in Hebrew, means “may the presence of God be with you”

In this moment, the disciples receive and experience the peace of God, the presence of God.

Then Jesus calls them into service by saying “As the Father has sent me, so I send you” and he breathes the Holy Spirit, the presence of God, upon them and gives them the gift of forgiveness.

This is the Gospel...this is the Good News.

It is a story about a new beginning.

The Risen Lord restores the disciples with the gift of God’s presence and the Holy Spirit and sends them on a mission of love, healing, forgiveness, and hope.

And by embracing this gift, the doors are unlocked

Jesus comes to each of us; he meets us where we are

In the midst of our troubles

And through our Baptism, we receive the Holy Spirit and are given the same mission as those gathered in that room.

We, as disciples of Christ, are each called to be a living presence to those who remain in bondage, locked behind the doors of fear, doubt, and shame.

We are each called to reach out and meet others where they are;

We are each called to share by word and example the Good News of God in Christ,

By sharing God's love and forgiveness so that the doors to their hearts might be unlocked, as they come to know, experience, and embrace God's love and forgiveness brought to each of us through Our Lord Jesus Christ.

*Amen*