

**Peace Not of This World**    Fifth Week of Easter    Tuesday, May 16, 2017    8:15 AM  
Acts 14:19-28;    **Jn 14:27-31a**    (We can live without our hearts being troubled or afraid precisely because of the presence of the Holy Spirit.)

**“Not as the world gives do I give it to you. Do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid.”**

The gospels have different areas, different topics, and this particular one is **the whole area of inner life, personal consciousness.**

Some of the stories in the Bible could be understood as simply describing things happening in the life of Jesus or in the life of the disciples or teachings that could be taken as perhaps moral instruction. But every once in a while if one reads carefully, one realizes that **the gospels are going way beyond what ordinary human awareness deals with.** There is a boundary that it crosses. It moves us beyond what we would normally consider our comfort zone, beyond what we would consider where we normally live and inhabit.

**It is very natural for people to be troubled and afraid in the world we are living in.** It is perfectly natural. It is a natural and healthy reaction to danger, which is all around us. In fact this gospel affirms the fact that the ruler of this world is not God at all; this is referring to the evil one. The world is not evil. The world is good. The world is created by God, but **the ruler of the world is the spirit of deceit, the father of lies,** in the terms of the gospel. Thus people are deceived, do not know the truth, and affirm or embrace **values that are actually self-destructive, especially the values of power, wealth, pleasure, fame. Those values will undermine anyone’s well-being eventually.**

And that’s why **Jesus says, “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. Not as the world gives do I give it to you,”** because he’s not talking about the categories that the world accepts or the values the world accepts. He is talking about something else. **He is really talking**

**about the Holy Spirit, the very power of God.** It is really given to us **as our friend, as our advocate, and as our companion to live with us and to move with us through life.** And because of the Holy Spirit we really can confront the fears and the troubles of life without fear and trouble, although that might sound contrary. But **we can live without our hearts being troubled or afraid precisely because of the presence of the Holy Spirit.**

And that is Jesus' gift to us, and we cannot exaggerate its importance. It is the very gift of God. And since **Jesus** now in this particular text is talking about his physical departure—his physical departure—he **wants to assure his disciples that his physical departure does not in any way entail abandonment or separation in any true sense.** The presence of Christ remains. The presence of God remains. The power of God remains. And in an odd way is **almost enhanced because it's no longer focused on someone out there. It is now within us.** That is the great gift that we celebrate with Pentecost, but really need to live out every day.