

The sacred moments in the upper room draw to a close. The Last supper has been shared, the Eucharist instituted, the innermost secrets of Jesus' heart declared. It is time for our Lord to start the last journey of which he has so often spoken. But first, He will say "Farewell" ..and how does He say it?

The first word and only word of farewell from his lips is "Peace"..Peace to the fear that grips his disciples..Peace to our fears as Christians in a world increasingly hostile to God.

To say "peace" was the customary way of both greeting and parting, but on the lips of Jesus, it meant something more..much more. "The Peace that is MINE I give to you". Facing the toils of a traitor, with His enemies gathering to destroy Him, He reveals the peace that is within Him and gifts it to his disciples.

His is an inward peace, independent of all circumstances, springing from His union with the Father..and He will not disturb that peace which the disciples had found in Him and breathed in every moment of companionship with Him.

We long for peace on our world..we pray for peace at each Mass in the hope that it will reverberate throughout the cosmos. But His is the peace WITHIN to face a world WITHOUT IT it..a Peace of which He is the absolute Lord and Source. So the Lord speaks facing the dire and immediate prospect of Death, BY WHICH the peace He leaves with us is finally and forever secured. We need to expand our horizons to the Cross and appreciate this Peace has a cosmic dimension, for by His Cross, Death has been

conquered.. Satan and his minions are on the run from their stronghold made of sin.

There is therefore no room for distress or cowardly fear -neither in the souls of the disciples, nor in ours. When He says, “let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid”, Jesus uses a verb not used elsewhere in the New Testament. The fear He addresses now is the same ghastly fear provoked by the imminence of War. The peace that quells it is manifest in His opposition to the ways of the world that lead to war ..While His peace is sharply distinguished from the kind customarily desired in tired out salutations and farewells... it is NOT the peace which consists merely in the cessation of strife and war ...it is NOT that false sense of security which cries, “Peace, Peace..when there is no peace.”

It is as if He says, “When I GIVE, it is really giving..it is giving with POWER, while, when the world says a farewell to you in the ordinary form, “Peace be with you”, it gives you only empty words..a wish without power.

On leaving the disciples, Jesus would make them experience and cling to the perfect, inward quietness of His own which they had beheld. In the face of hostility and death, His peace arises in Him from the confidence in His Father’s love. This ABSOLUTE CONFIDENCE it is which he wishes to inspire in them, and by means of which His peace will become theirs..and OURS.

Come, Holy Spirit in the footsteps of the Lord’s Peace to this poor world still in the clutches of Satan. Renew the face of the earth, Preside over new and Godly organizations of men and women, and give us the Peace which is

yours alone and conquers all. We consecrate ourselves entirely to you. Invade us, take us, possess us wholly.

BE the penetrating light which illumines our minds, the gentle motion which so attracts and directs our wills, the supernatural power which gives true energy to our bodies.

Complete in us your work of bringing us to sit at the feet of our Father by your fire. Make us pure, transparent, simple, true, free, gentle, calm even in suffering, burning with charity toward God and our neighbor.. and we shall be at peace from now on.