

# THE FIRST 15

Tuesday, May 7, 2024

Today is Tuesday, May 7 and we are studying the Gospel of John.

## OPENING PRAYER

*Blessed and Holy Lord God, I pause at the threshold of a new day and seek your presence. I quiet my mind and focus my entire self on you - Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Give me your vision and inspiration for what lies ahead, journey with me in my comings and goings and be my companion on the way. Remind me that you are always working for good in my relationships, activities and conversations. Amen.*

## SCRIPTURE

***“If you love me, keep my commands. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever— the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. All this I have spoken while still with you. But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.” John 14:15-18, 25-27***

## REFLECTION

The fourteenth chapter of the Gospel of John contains Jesus' final words to his disciples. Spoken in the hours prior to his betrayal and arrest, Jesus' Farewell Discourse (John 14-17) contains a promise of peace and the coming of the Holy Spirit. Jesus leaves a precious gift with his followers who are soon to be cast into disbelief, uncertainty, fear and chaos. He promises a peace that the world cannot give. The Holy Spirit, the inner Counselor, is sent to teach all of us for all time and remind us of Jesus' words. Peace is provided, given as a final gift, with words that encourage us to not be afraid. Our hearts are not to be troubled. Jesus wants me to claim his peace for myself and share his peace with others.

There is a force in this world that is opposite of the goodness of God. A force working against peace. This negative force upsets life, causes instability, dis-ease, and imbalance. Chaos and confusion enter. Violence, turmoil, unrest, disorder and commotion increase. Evil loves to divide - division threatens organizations, friends, families and homes. Evil loves to cause strife between people, break down relationships and stir up turmoil. The lord of chaos loves discord, division, disruption and disturbance. Relationships corrode with disagreement, disharmony and distress. Marriages fracture and break apart. Families are destroyed. Friendships are ruined. Disharmony can take hold on the inside of us too. Every day people experience stress and tension. They struggle to clear their minds from the churning activity roiling within. Some souls become tormented with anxiety, worry and fear.

We have a God of peace. The Biblical word for peace is “shalom.” It is a Hebrew word that means, harmony, health and wholeness. Shalom marks a believer’s relationship to themselves, God and others. Peace is total and complete well-being - wholeness. The Messiah is the bringer of shalom. Jesus is the Prince of Peace. As I consider the anxiety of the world, the uncertainty in my heart and the unrest of the upcoming day, I hear the words of Jesus spoken to me, “My peace I give you.” The antidote to worldly turmoil is the peace of Christ. Nothing in the world could ever provide that sense of peace. It is a peace that passes understanding. When Jesus is present - peace is made manifest.

**Ask:** Where in my world, my community, my relationships or my life is peace absent? How can I invite the Peace of Christ into those places?

**Pause and Pray**

## **CLOSING PRAYER**

*Blessed Lord Jesus, you are the Prince of Peace. Come into places of discord, disagreement, disease and division. Where there is turmoil, bring tranquility. Where there is unrest, bring stability. Where there is fighting, bring peace. Where there is conflict, bring harmony. Where there is chaos, breathe calm. Where there is fear, bring love. Come bring the peace that passes understanding. Amen.*