

Commentary on the Gospel for Wed, May 22nd 2013

Among the many desires we have in life, surely one of the most significant and universal is the desire to experience peace. In the midst of life's countless headaches and hassles, we long for a time and place where we can simply be at peace. As people of faith, we know that our lives are not immune to troubles and conflicts, simply because we profess the name of Jesus. But where can we find at least some oases of refreshment? Where can we find peace?

“O Lord, great peace have they who love your law.” The words of today's responsorial psalm reveal that a great measure of peace is promised to those who love the law of the Lord. In its simplest form, the verse uncovers for us the truth that often our lack of peace comes from a reluctance to embrace limits, a search for “freedom” defined as lack of external constraint. Living within the loving bounds set for us by the Lord shepherds us from the valley of darkness into the green pastures of peace.

For us who profess faith in Jesus, however, there is more. Jesus, who came not to abolish but to bring the law to perfection, is himself the source of peace; he is our law, our pattern of activity, but also the one who brings peace. We are reminded of Jesus' farewell speech to his apostles: “Peace I leave with you; my own peace I give you.” Peace is not an attribute: lack of upset. Peace is communion with Jesus and his promises.

Where today are we experiencing upset, headaches and hassles? Where are we without peace?

Today's scripture invites us to ask if we have been trying to live without limits, boundaries and all that comes from the law of the Lord. In addition, we may need to make the time to go to Jesus with our lack of peace, relating to him all that is upsetting us, or asking him to reveal the source of our unrest. In all circumstances we remember the promises: Those who love the Lord's law have great peace; peace comes from being one with Jesus.

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