



Monday, April 9, 2012

**READ-** The Gospel: John 20:19-31

Although Mary had already seen Jesus alive and had told the other disciples, they were not convinced. So they were locked away in fear when Jesus came to them. They saw and believed and he gave them the power of the Holy Spirit to spread the news and forgive sins.

**REFLECT-**

- Thomas often gets a bad rap for his refusal to believe without seeing Jesus himself. Yet the other disciples did not believe Mary's testimony. We all have times of doubt in our faith walk. Jesus comes to us many times and in many ways so that our faith is encouraged, just as he did for these first disciples.

**PRAY-**

O God, thank you for the faith and obedience of these courageous men and women who saw Jesus, believed and shared that faith with the whole world so that we may also believe. Amen.

Tuesday, April 10, 2012

**READ-** Acts of the Apostles: Acts 4:32-35

These early Christians sought to live as Jesus taught – sharing freely of their material goods, living in harmony with one another, and giving thanks for all Christ accomplished.

**REFLECT-**

- Western Christians of our day living in our capitalist society read this passage with great suspicion. “Sounds like a socialist way – if no one has to earn their keep, how could it work?” These disciples were living into the coming Kingdom in which jealousy, greed, laziness, and other forms of sin no longer exist. We are called to also “live into” that Kingdom in every way we possibly can.

**PRAY-**

O God, help me to use my gifts, talents and material resources generously and compassionately to do the work of your Kingdom. Amen.

Wednesday, April 11, 2012

**READ-** The Epistle: | John 1:1 – 2:2

John's offers his firsthand, eyewitness testimony of Christ's saving sacrifice and God's grace and mercy expressed to all humanity and creation through Christ. He assures his listeners of God's abundant mercy if only we will confess our sins, repent and turn from our sinful ways, we will be assured of eternal life through Jesus' atoning work on the cross.

**REFLECT-**

- Verse 8 cuts to the heart of the matter. “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves.” What sinful attitudes, thoughts and behaviors are you holding onto? It is not enough to confess sin and ask for forgiveness; repentance means turning away from those sins and changing. How do you respond to John's challenge?

**PRAY-**

Father, only through your power and healing can I turn away from this sin. I confess it now to you and ask that you give me the power to turn around, to change and to be healed. Amen.

Thursday, April 12, 2012

**READ-** The Psalm: Psalm 133

This psalm celebrates peace and unity, not just within biological families, but within the collective family of God. When Jews made their annual pilgrimage to Mt. Zion, this was one of the psalms sung as they made their way up the mountain. The anointing oil reflects joy and abundance. Mt. Hermon was known for its abundant dew providing water needed to sustain the land around it.

**REFLECT-**

- Families do not always live in peace. There is often discord and dysfunction and sometimes those whom we love the most are the ones we hurt. To whom in your family do you need to offer forgiveness and extend a hand of peace?

**PRAY-**

Lord, help me to put aside old family hurts, to forgive, and live peaceably with my family. Forgive me when I have caused them hurt. Amen.

Friday, April 13, 2012

**ACT-**

Focus Verse: John 20:21-22

Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” When he had said this, he breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit.”

As you begin your day, read these verses aloud and hear Jesus speaking directly to you. What does it mean to receive the peace Jesus can give? Sit quietly with your eyes closed and feel that peace flow over and through you. To what purpose may Jesus be “sending you” today? Pray that you will be open, watchful and receptive to the leading of the Spirit as you go about your day. You are empowered by the Holy Spirit to do Christ's will!