



a Kendall Hunt Company

Sixth Sunday of Easter, Year C, Junior High

Submitted by lectionaryadmin on Wed, 04/10/2013 - 20:00

Junior High Session

Acts 15:1-2, 22-29

John 14:23-29

Opening Prayer

Let us pray.

God of Peace,

thank you for the gift of your peaceful presence.

Help us to be peacemakers in our world today.

In the name of Jesus Christ we pray.

Amen.

Opening Life Reflection

The theme today is peace. To begin, invite everyone to brainstorm what comes to mind when they think of the word peace. Write down their responses. Discuss:

- How do you experience peace?
- When do you feel most peaceful?
- What is the difference between the peace of the world and the peace that Jesus has to offer?

Allow time for discussion. Jesus left his followers with the gift of peace. The peace that Jesus gives is not fragile like the peace of the world. The peace that Jesus gives is an inner peace, which dwells in our hearts.

Listening to the Word of God

In the first reading from Acts learn how the apostles address the concerns of the Gentile community.

Read Acts 15:1-2, 22-29.

Allow for silence.



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Scripture Discussion Starters

- What are the concerns of the non-Jewish community?
- How do the apostles address the concerns of the Gentiles?
- What essential teachings are given to the Gentile community?

In the Gospel listen to Jesus calm the fears of his disciples.

Read John 14:23-29.

Allow for silence.

- What is Jesus preparing his disciples for?
- Who will be sent by the Father to help the disciples?
- What does Jesus give his disciples?

Scripture Background

Provide 2-3 minutes of background information on the readings using the Catechist Background section.

Today's reading from Acts shows the response of the Church's leadership in Jerusalem to the concerns of the Gentile community at Antioch. The Gentiles are disturbed by some of the teachings that they are hearing about. Paul and Barnabas consult with the apostles and elders of the Church in Jerusalem about the questions raised by the Gentiles. The final decision regarding Church teaching is reached by the Church's leadership in Jerusalem and brought to the Gentile community at Antioch. Representatives are sent in peace to calm the hearts of the Gentiles and bring them the essential Church teachings.

The Gospel today continues the farewell discourse of Jesus. Jesus is preparing his disciples for his departure from them. He promises that they will not be left alone. The Father will send the Holy Spirit to help the disciples remember all that Jesus taught them.

Jesus continues his farewell with tenderness. He tells his disciples that he is leaving them with the gift of peace. The peace that Jesus gives his followers is a peace that the world cannot give--it is the gift of his presence, an inner peace that assures his followers that they will not be abandoned. The Holy Spirit is promised to help the disciples continue the works of Jesus. And the gift of peace will dwell in the hearts of the disciples for all time.

Jesus brings comfort and peace to his disciples by telling them that he will always be with them and they will be cared for, even after Jesus leaves them.



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Questions for Deeper Reflection

- How does Jesus calm the fears of his disciples?
- How does Jesus help to calm your fears?
- When do you sense the peace of Jesus?

If you are not going to continue with the doctrinal discussion, proceed to the Gospel in Life.

Doctrinal Discussion Starters

Peace

The Catholic understanding of peace begins with Jesus' farewell gift to his disciples. The peace that Jesus gives is a peace that the world cannot give. This understanding of peace means much more than the absence of conflict or war. The biblical understanding of the word peace is found in the Hebrew word "shalom" from the Old Testament. "Shalom" means well being, total harmony with nature, God, and self. It is the benefit of God's presence with his people.

Catholic teaching on peace encourages us to be peacemakers for our time. We are called to support the reduction of nuclear weapons and arms and to pray for peace. In the words of the pastoral letter titled *The Challenge of Peace*, "...peacemaking is not an optional commitment. It is a requirement of our faith. We are called to be peacemakers, not by some movement of the moment, but by our Lord Jesus." (Summary, *The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response*, NCCB, May 3, 1983:p9).

- How are you called to be a peacemaker?
- How can you learn more about the Church's teachings on peace?
- Name some peacemakers in our world today.

The Gospel in Life

What policies does your school have for dealing with conflict or violence? Find out how you can get involved in settling disagreements peacefully at your school.

Connecting to Be My Disciples

Grade 4, chapter 7

Grade 5, chapter 7

Grade 6, chapter 7

Connecting to Faith First® Legacy Edition

At Home Family Guide, theme 27



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Junior High, Morality, chapter 9

Junior High, Jesus in the New Testament, chapter 9

Blest Are We

Grade 7, chapter 5

Grade 8, chapter 3

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