***APRIL REFLECTION 2024***

***Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.***

***Invocation*** *(Make the sign of the cross as the leader prays the invocation.)*

Leader: *+ Blessed are the peacemakers,*

***All: for they will be called children of God.***

*Leader: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.*

***All: As it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.***

***Psalm 27*** *(pray antiphonally)*

***The LORD is my light and my salvation;***

***whom should I fear?***

***The LORD is my life’s refuge;***

***of whom should I be afraid?***

***When evildoers come at me***

***to devour my flesh,***

***these my enemies and foes***

***themselves stumble and fall.***

***Though an army encamp against me,***

***my heart does not fear;***

***Though war be waged against me,***

***even then do I trust.***

***One thing I ask of the LORD;***

***this I seek:***

***to dwell in the LORD’s house***

***all the days of my life,***

***to gaze on the LORD’s beauty,***

***to visit his temple.***

***Scripture*** *Jesus said, “Whoever loves me will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our dwelling with him.* *Whoever does not love me does not keep my words; yet the word you hear is not mine but that of the Father who sent me.* *“I have told you this while I am with you.* *The Advocate, the holy Spirit that the Father will send in my name—he will teach you everything and remind you of all that [I] told you.* *Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give it to you. Do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid.* *You heard me tell you, ‘I am going away and I will come back to you. If you loved me, you would rejoice that I am going to the Father; for the Father is greater than I.* *And now I have told you this before it happens, so that when it happens you may believe.*

*John 14:23-29*

**(Pause for a few moments to meditate on the reading.)**

***Reflection*** *And what does Jesus bring? On the night before his death? To us today?*

*Peace. His peace.*

*Not the world’s peace. Jesus doesn’t bring that sort of thing. As if the world has ever known peace long enough to lick a stamp.*

*No, Jesus brings the shalom of God, where everything is good and right. Where everything is in its place, and where there are no dark corners to shelter evil from the warm glow of God’s pure light. The kind of peace that walks on water, that stills the storm, and fills our jars to the brim with the finest of wines. The kind of peace that brings sight to the blind, restores hearing to the deaf, and tells the lame to get up and go home.*

*The kind of peace that comes to a tomb and renders it empty.*

**That***kind of peace.*

*Where hearts never need be troubled—for what could ever cause such a stir in the presence of God’s Shalom?*

*Where there is nothing to fear. Nothing.*

*The kind of peace that bombs and storms and cancer and injustice and terrorists and dissidents and lobbyists and weapons of mass destruction and dark hairy beasts which go bump in the night—where none of those things which usher in the valley of the shadow of death can usher in even an ounce of fear.*

*Because there is no oxygen for fear to breathe. No room for fear to move. No water for fear to swim in.*

*Because the peace of Jesus has soaked us to the bone, and nothing can wring it out.*

**That’s***what Jesus brings. To us.*

*Rick Morley*

***Prayer O God, Creator of the universe, who extends your paternal concern over every creature and guides the events of history to goals of salvation, we acknowledge your Fatherly love when you break the resistance of mankind and, in a world torn by strife and discord, you make us ready for reconciliation. Renew for us the wonders of your MERCY; send forth your******Spirit that He may work in the intimacy of our hearts, that enemies may begin to dialogue, that adversaries may shake hands, and peoples may encounter one another in harmony. May all commit themselves to the sincere search for true peace which will extinguish all arguments, for charity which overcomes hatred, for pardon which disarms revenge.***

***Amen.***

*Pope St. John Paul II*

***Sign of the Cross***

