

“Peace to this household.”

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

Once upon a time, in 1980, a national magazine carried an unusual story. A man returned to his car, which was parked near a large shopping mall. Lying on the front seat was a note:

“Dear sir or madam:

I fully intended to steal your car, until I noticed the ‘Peace-Be-to-You’ sticker. It made me pause and reflect. I reasoned that, if I did steal your car, you certainly would not be at peace. On the other hand, I realized that I would not be at peace either, as this was my ‘first job.’ So, ‘peace be to you’ and ...to me. Drive carefully and, next time, lock your car!”

Signed: “A would-be car thief.”



That unusual story, though somewhat humorous, illustrates the rather unusual instruction Jesus gives his disciples in today’s Gospel, which I just read to you from St. Luke. He said:

“Into whatever house you enter, first say, ‘Peace to this household.’

If a peaceful person lives there, your peace will rest on him; but if not, it will return to you.”

Applying that to today’s **‘Once Upon a Time’** story, we see that the **‘Peace-Be-to-You’** sticker extended the **‘Peace of Christ’** to the would-be thief. The thief was a **peaceable man** at heart and the peace of Christ rested upon him.



Now, this raises a question: “What do we actually mean by the... **‘Peace of Christ’**,” you ask?

Well, I am glad you asked that question!

The Bible uses the word **‘peace’** in four different senses:

1st, it uses it in a **military sense** –to indicate an absence of war between nations. Thus, we say, **“The nation is at peace.”**

2nd, it uses it in a **personal sense** –to indicate a feeling of personal well-being. Thus, we say, **“We are at peace with ourselves.”**

3rd, it uses it in a **religious sense** –to indicate a right relationship ‘tween God & self. Thus we say, **“We are at peace with God.”**

4th, it uses it in a **universal sense** --to indicate a state in which everyone on earth is at peace with God, neighbor, and self. This 4th way ...is what we mean by the **“Peace of Christ”**

This is what Jesus meant when he said:

“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you.” Jn. 14:27

The priest recalls these very words in each celebration of Mass. This peace is nothing else, but the realization of God’s kingdom on earth –the kingdom we pray for in the Lord’s Prayer, every time we say, **“Thy kingdom come.”**

It is this peace that Jesus instructed his disciples to carry into the world of their day.

It is this very same peace that Jesus instructs us to carry into the world of our day.

We are to be instruments by which the **‘Peace of Christ’** is extended to every individual in every nation on earth!



I will now share with you an analogy to demonstrate exactly HOW Jesus intends us to do this!

*When the winds of a tropical storm reach 75 mph, the storm is called a **typhoon** if it's in the Pacific Ocean; it is called a **hurricane** if it's in the Atlantic Ocean.* (I know you'll sleep better tonight by the time I finish this little analogy!) *To get an idea of what a hurricane/typhoon is really like, imagine a Frisbee with a hole in its center. Now, in your mind's eye, imagine that Frisbee grows & grows & grows until it becomes 100 mls. across, with the hole in the center grows to 10 mls. across. Now, spin this giant Frisbee. Spin it faster & faster & faster until it reaches a rate of 100 mph.*

That's what a hurricane is like!

*The interesting part of a hurricane is its **"eye"** –the hole in the center of the Frisbee. Even though the winds are hurling and thrashing all around it at speeds of over a 100 mph, the **"eye,"** in the very center of the hurricane, is calm. There is no wind blowing in the center at all! If you stand in the center of a hurricane and look up, you see blue sky and the sun shining.*



The "eye" of the hurricane is a good image of what Jesus intended the Lord's Supper to be, as we gather to share it each morning, each Saturday afternoon, or on any Sunday.

All about us, storms rage in the world: people shout and steal, gangs prowl and attack, political fanatics disparage & deceive, nations battle, Isis rampages, & all forms of life are destroyed.

*At the Lord's Supper, however, all is calm. We look up & we see only blue sky, a shining sun. We are in the **"eye"** of the hurricane ...in the **"eye"** of the storm. We enjoy ...the **'Peace of Christ.'***

Jesus gave us this peace –not to remain in it permanently, but to refuel in it, temporarily. Just as the eye of the hurricane lasts only about an hour as it passes through, so the Lord's Supper lasts only about one hour.

*Jesus never intended us to remain in the **eye** of the hurricane, but that we go out again into the storm. Jesus intended that we go forth from the Lord's Supper to be an **'eye of peace'** amidst the storms of life.*

*He intended that we share the **'Peace of Christ,'** which we encounter in Eucharist, with the rest of the world, here in our corner of the vineyard. He intended that we be the instruments by which the **'Peace of Christ'** would spread to the rest of the world. On Ascension Thursday, he handed us the baton, in the race of life, to carry-on his mission.*

*This **4th** sense of the word **'peace'** is a **Universal Peace**, **THE 'Peace of Christ'** in which every-one on earth is at peace, that is, with **God**, with **neighbor**, and with **self**. It is the realization of God's kingdom on earth.*

*It is **this** peace that Jesus made possible by becoming man.*

*It is **this** peace that Jesus instructed his disciples to bring into the world of their time.*

*It is **this** peace that Jesus instructed us to bring into the world of our time.*

It is this peace that we pray Jesus will pour out upon us this (afternoon/) morning:

*Lord, make **me** an instrument of your **peace**. Where there is hatred, let **me** sow love. Where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy. Grant that I may not so much seek to **be** consoled, as **to** console; to **be** understood, as to **un-derstand**; to **be** loved, as **to** love; for it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; and it is in dying ...that we are born to eternal life. Amen. St. Francis of Assisi*

May Almighty God, our Abba, bless you, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.