

Fourteenth Sunday of Ordinary Time
Cycle A, 2017
Church of St. Joan of Arc, Marlton NJ

Peace and Humble Pie

Come to me, all you who are weary. Are you a little weary these days?

I am a little weary of war and talk of war and all the violence.

Last weekend, July Fourth weekend, there were over 400 shootings in Chicago alone. In New York City, a police officer is shot point blank. Outside of Philly, an 18 year old girl is shot in her car by another driver. And to top it all off, the crazy man in charge of North Korea tested an ICBM missile.

That wearies me ... and I am relatively safe here in Marlton. I don't live with the constant threat of war, violence, or terror. I don't know how people deal with it every day.

How can we deal with it?
The Scriptures give us hints.

The Prophet Zechariah tells us that our king will come and he will banish bows and arrows, he will banish tanks and ICBM. He shall proclaim peace to the nations.

We believe Jesus Christ is this King. He has proclaimed peace to the nations.

Jesus wants peace.

Jesus gives us his peace.

Jesus wants us to be peacemakers. Peacemakers, he says, are children of God.

Peace, as you've heard, is not just the absence of war. Peace is active, it is doing something.

What can we do? We can't control North Korea, but we can control our attitude, our mood, our tongue. We can control how we speak to one another; what we send in emails; what we put on Facebook.

Last Friday was the 36th anniversary of the death of a woman named Peace Pilgrim. Ever hear of her? She was an amazing woman. I don't know

her birth name. Somewhere along the way she decided she was going to live to spread the message of peace. She officially changed her name to Peace Pilgrim. She put her name on the sweatshirt she wore. She began walking – a little bit like Forrest Gump – all across the country. That’s what she did every day. She walked for peace. She shared peace with people.

In some way – in a very real way – all of us as disciples of Jesus Christ are called to be pilgrims of peace.

How can we do it?

Think for a minute? What is something you can do this week – either inside yourself, or in a relationship, at work, at home, in the neighborhood, here in the parish – that can put a little more peace and harmony into the world.

Here’s one suggestion straight out of the Gospel. Jesus says he is meek and humble of heart. To live more peacefully, begin to develop a humble heart.

When you have a humble heart, you don’t have to be number one ... you don’t have to always be right ... you admit when you are wrong ... you can accept criticism ...

You don’t have to be in the center, in the spotlight, you don’t have to get all the attention.

If you have a humble heart, you are a good listener, you let others tell you about their day and their problems before you go and spill your guts.

If you have a humble heart, you live within community; you work for the good of all; you put the common good above your own self-interest.

If you have a humble heart, you, you are content with who you are and what you have; you don’t have to have the latest of everything; you don’t think the world or people or God owes you anything.

If you have a humble heart, you live gratefully, recognizing everything as a gift from God. Like St. Paul you can say, “*all is grace*”:

the smooth sailing and the
shipwrecks.

If each of us could grow a bit
more of a humble heart,
imagine how much better the
world will be.