



Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

**The Newman University
community invites you to join
us in celebrating the 50 days of
the Easter season with these
reflections.**

April 12 - Second Sunday of Easter - Acts 2:42-47; 1 Peter 1:3-9; John 20:19-31

When we hear “Peace be with you,” we want to ask: Where? If Peace doesn’t come to us, maybe we need to search for Peace. What is our part to do to invite God’s Peace? How do I become a person who exudes Peace?

Having a good conscience is a worthwhile basis for Peace in our hearts. Forming a good conscience can be a challenge to our ego. Only through prayer, study, reflection, experience in a relationship or a community, can a right conscience be formed. Just a few verses beyond the end of our first Reading, St. Peter advises us to “Always be ready with an answer to anyone who asks the reason for the hope that is in you, but do it with gentleness and respect, having a good conscience.” (1 Peter 3:15)

When someone asks, “the reason for the hope that is in you,” people with inner Peace are often the persons who are asked—and the ones who can give the best answer. Does our being, our personality, carry the message that portrays Peace to the people who know us? Or even to someone who meets us for the first time?

According to the Acts of the Apostles, early Christian communities willingly shared their possessions, so no one was in need. They could indeed eat their meals “with exultation and sincerity of heart, praising God and enjoying favor with all the people.” We can consider that to mean: not only was their Peace among the Christian communities, but it spilled over to at least some of the non-Christians. When Peace brings a willingness to share, I may need to ask: Am I the kind of person who refuses to remain complacent when I realize I have more than I need? Am I ready to share my goods with someone whose needs are not being met?

Having Peace in our minds and the “sincerity of heart” of the early Christians, is an invitation for the Holy Spirit to find a dwelling place within us. After Jesus says, “Peace be with you” a second time in today’s Gospel, he sends his disciples on their journey, but he doesn’t send them without help: “Receive the Holy Spirit,” he says. The message of Jesus is to send them as the Father sent him.

We are being sent to recognize the persons who need to hear from us those inviting and comforting words that Jesus spoke: “Peace be with you.” **Elaine Freund, ASC**

April 13, Monday of the Second Week of Easter - Acts 4:23-31; John 3:1-8

In the Gospel, Jesus tells Nicodemus we must be born of the Spirit, which is like the wind, unseen but powerful, giving us new life in God. This new life transforms us from within, shaping our hearts, minds, and actions in ways we often cannot see. In Acts, we witness the disciples living this transformation. Faced with threats and uncertainty, they do not pray for safety, but for boldness, and God fills them with the Holy Spirit. The same Spirit that empowered them continues to give us courage to spread the Word of God and live our faith openly each day.

Grace Long, Newman Student

April 14, Tuesday of the Second Week of Easter - Acts 4:32-37; John 3:7b-15

In the reading of John, Jesus tells us that we must be born of the Spirit, and that when we start to stray from Him or no longer understand his teachings, we must be born again. In the Acts of the Apostles, we see how people behave when they are born of the Spirit and follow the word of God. Believers come together as one and share with each other so that no one person is in need. This Easter season, we are reminded by these readings to come together as a community and serve each other with generosity because we are all born of God's Spirit and therefore are one being.

Bryn Kovacic, Major Gifts Officer

April 15, Wednesday of the Second Week of Easter - Acts 5:17-26; John 3:16-21

In today's gospel, we hear the iconic line from John 3:16: "For God so loved the world that he gave us his only son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish, but have eternal life." These consoling and reassuring words, remind us of God's constant deep and unfathomable love for each and every one of us. This love like any form of human love demands a response. How are we to respond to God's love? The first part of one's response to God's love is to simply receive His love and allow that to form our identity. Secondly, we are called to imitate God's son, Jesus in making a complete and total self-gift of ourselves to others. This imitation of Christ lays within the heart of being a saint and responding to God's love here on earth.

Rev. Mr. Peter Bergkamp '20, Transitional Deacon

April 16, Thursday of the Second Week of Easter - Acts 5:27-33; John 3:31-36.

From the passage from Acts, we see the apostles' courageous commitment to "obey God rather than men," even when facing opposition. This serves as a reminder of the strength God gives us through the Resurrection when we look to him for help and stand firm in our faith. It also reminds us that we always have the option to choose our response, even if we dislike the initial consequences. John reminds us that "the one who comes from above is above all," pointing us toward the eternal perspective and the life-giving Spirit that Christ offers to those who believe. Many think of this as hope and a belief that something much better awaits us on the other side after death if we strive to accept and live by God's laws.

Sheryl Stanley, Honorary Alumna

April 17, Friday of the Second Week of Easter - Acts 5:34-42; John 6:1-15

So many nuggets of truth for our lives are to be found in these two readings!

“If this plan or this undertaking is of human origin, it will fail; but if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them.”

“The apostles left...rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the Name.”

“Every day... at home the apostles did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus Christ.”

“Jesus took the loaves, and when he had given thanks...”

“Gather up the fragments left over, that nothing may be lost.”

Take one of these nuggets. Ponder it during the day. Listen for the truth being spoken personally to you for your life today.

Anonymous

April 18. Saturday of the Second Week of Easter - Acts 6:1-7; John 6:16-21

These verses make me think about the importance of faith and service. The verses in John 6 artistically describe a scene of stress in a turbulent lake, in which Jesus comes and calms the waters. It makes me think of how we run into these "strong winds " and "rough waters" constantly and just need something or someone to help "calm the lake". Similarly, Acts 6 describes a complaint, an early stress, in the church; however, in this case, instead of Jesus calming the waters, the disciples band together and help each other. If we were to grow from these verses, all we need is to observe the subtle comparison of the disciples and Jesus; to be Jesus-like is to be in service of those who are on those rough waves and waging against those strong winds.

Daniel Knolla, '22