6 C Easter 2025

I have been at the bedside of the dying some of whom had regretted they did not have more wealth to leave to loved ones. They saw their contribution to the future solely in terms of financial benefits they would leave behind. Invited to subsequent dinner gathering, I witnessed family members go at each other over a perceived unfair will. Inherited money is dangerous. It’s meant to help, but it can divide: *“Teacher, tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me.” Jesus replied, “Friend, who set Me to be judge and arbitrator over you.”*

In St Luke’s Gospel, Jesus did not divide one family member from the other over the issue of inheritance. One was ready and willing to break the relationship for the sake of the money. In St Francis’ last hours, his last will and testament was that the brothers would remain together in spite of their differences. Francis valued relationships above all else. The gift of peace is the true generative gift of the future.

At wake services and prayers for the one who has passed, I will ask those present to share a memory, hoping that we may find the gift of peace in some of their stories. If we were bequeathed money, we would spend it. Should we be left a story of peace, we are given the opportunity to remember it and act upon it. Given Jesus as the model, the Holy Spirit helps us remember peace, and through remembering, teaches us the way of peace. The Spirit is the agent of peace.

In today’s Gospel, Jesus promises His disciples the Spirit, as well as His farewell gift of peace. Peace signifies the restoration of harmonious relations between God and humankind. Peace is also the bond of accord between one another. *“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.”* God accompanies us as we accompany one another—stories of companionship: Benedict and Scholastica, Francis and Clare, Comas and Damian, Abraham and Sarah.

Walking with God is for each of us. It’s a theme in the Scriptures from Adam to Moses to Mary to us. God walked in the Garden with Adam and Eve; God promised Abraham and Moses, *“I will be with you;”* and Gabriel to Mary, *“the Lord is with you;”* the angel in a dream to Joseph, *“don’t be afraid.”* Jesus speaks these stories of peace to us.

Three Persons, One God. When we are true to the Word of Jesus, the Father comes and dwells with us. When we take this Word to heart, the Spirit, the Paraclete, will be sent to us in the name of Jesus to instruct us, remind us, and teach us—but most especially to bring us the peace of Christ, the Son’s gift to us. This peace is given so that we are not distressed or fearful, or racked with dissenters, but that we live as one, in God and one another.

