

When you're exhausted, I don't care how much faith you have, there are going to be moments when you're grumpy. I caught myself being grumpy the other day and so I prayed to God about it. I love praying to God when I'm grumpy because I can give Him a long list of reasons why I'm grumpy and God responded as He always does. God inspired me to put my list aside for a moment and look ahead to this Sunday's scripture to consider what I might be preaching about. God was talking right at me as He always does. In our Gospel passage, the Risen Jesus is standing before the disciples and He shows the disciples His glorified wounds and says, "Peace be with you". After everything Jesus went through, there He is, offering the gift of peace. There are so many adjectives to describe how the disciples were feeling before Jesus appeared to them and "peaceful" was not one of them. They were feeling **guilty** about fleeing Jesus when He was arrested. They were feeling **mournful** in the wake of Jesus' crucifixion. They were feeling **afraid**, hiding from the authorities out of fear for their lives. The Risen Jesus appears before them and says, "Peace be with you". How strange and wonderful! Jesus continues, "As the Father sent me so I send you". Jesus breathes on them, giving them the gift of the Holy Spirit and now these disciples are apostles.

Apostle comes from the Greek word meaning "sent". What a turnaround of events. After they receive the gift of peace, they're sent out to the world as Apostles. There's a theology being articulated surrounding the idea of being sent. In antiquity, when a king sent an ambassador to a neighboring kingdom, that ambassador was expected to be treated just the same as if that king was there himself. And so, Jesus is sent to us by the Father. This makes Jesus and the Father one. Just as the Son was sent by the Father, and the Holy Spirit is sent from the Father and the Son, the Apostles are now one with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. They become God's ambassadors and are sent to save the world by welcoming believers into the inner life of God Himself, to become one with God by the waters of baptism and the forgiveness of sins. A defining characteristic of a Christian sent by God is the gift of peace.

Even in the best of times, we can sometimes find it hard to live in peace with others- family members, neighbors, people we don't agree with. There's a lot of hate and violence in our world as we see in the news every day. Sometimes the greatest deprivation of peace comes when we look in the mirror and refuse to love who we see. God loves that person we see in the mirror, why can't we? This is why I think it's helpful that, on Pentecost, the Church recalls the Risen Lord appearing before the disciples and saying, "Peace be with you. As the Father sent me so I send you". There are moments in life when we just feel hungry for that gift of peace. When we receive that gift, it then becomes a gift for the people around us because it's like a **brushfire** that spreads. How do we get there? In my experience, the journey towards peace begins with prayer. When **prayer** becomes a priority over the endless tasks we perform, when **forgiveness** becomes a priority over the grudges we cling to, and when **hope** becomes a priority over the grief we suffer, the Holy Spirit can finally transform our existence and life just simply gets better. We become sent to share this gift of peace with others, at home, at work, in the community, wherever we go. The peace the Holy Spirit offers can even cure a case of grumpiness, or whatever else is getting in the way. To get there we pray, "Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created. And You shall renew the face of the earth.