

Jesus Our Peace

'Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled or afraid' (Jn 14:27).

Not as easy as it sounds. Sure, I'm praying-nothing but time to pray, lingering longer before Him. Hungry yes, still no Eucharist, but the Real Presence of Jesus in His Spirit meets me. At times, my whole being resounds with something like peace.

Until. I surprise myself. Just when I thought I could 'walk in the Spirit and not fulfill my lusts' (Gal. 5:16) ... Bam. My doctor's appointment was supposed to be quick and easy. But the line outside for temp-taking and masking was long; when the receptionist reprimanded me in a shrill voice-with a grotesque passport smile-'Get back sir, you are way too close!'-I saw myself lunge at her and successfully rip the façade off her 'pleasant' face.

'The peace He left' left. As I paced the waiting area (no room at that inn--most seats were blocked for distancing purposes), I felt good shame and mused on what lurks beneath most of our prayerful efforts. His peace still surpasses understanding but so does the unrest that seeps into our core and rattles us.

I asked for mercy. I prayed the Divine Mercy chaplet. It reminds me that Jesus' mercy suffices and extends way beyond me to meet those most in need of it. 'O Fount of Life, unfathomable Divine Mercy, empty Yourself out upon us and envelope the whole world...'

I aim His mercy at the world's front-liners, persons isolated and without familiar consolation in their distress. Like you, I've a dozen friends and relatives who suffer alone. And I pray for courageous medics who are the last ones to hold a fearful hand, losing its grip.

That's the real deal-the crux of this pandemic-good people losing breath and the hospital heroes who accompany them as we look on helplessly through various screens.

We cannot pass through the walls of this pandemic. But Divine Mercy and Peace can. I chuckle at my mixtures then pray for that River to flow to the most courageous, and vulnerable, in this fight.