



TO BE A PEACEMAKER you must know the peace-giver!

Sunday Reflection With Fr. Rafal

Dear Friends of St. Joseph Parish,

In 1888 a man came down for breakfast in his home in Stockholm, Sweden. When he opened the morning newspaper he was shocked to find his own obituary.

Through a confusion of names, his death had been falsely reported to the local paper. The editors quickly put together information for his death notice. This was not a difficult thing to do, because the man in question was a famous scientist. He had devised the formula for dynamite which, at that time, was the most powerful explosive in the world. So, this man had the rare opportunity to read himself what other people would say about him at his death. And what they said was not good. The title of the obituary was *The Merchant of Death Dies*. It continued, "The man who became rich by finding ways to kill more people more quickly than ever before, died himself yesterday." The scientist was appalled to realize that he would be remembered as the "merchant of death." He resolved at that moment to spend the rest of his life trying to change his legacy. He used his considerable fortune to promote efforts of peace and human advancement. In the end he was successful. The scientist was Alfred Nobel. We know him today, not as the inventor of dynamite, nor as the merchant of death, but as the founder of the Nobel Peace Prize.

Now Alfred Nobel wanted to become an agent of peace to change what people thought about him. We, as followers of Jesus, have an even greater motivation to be peacemakers. In today's gospel Jesus gives his disciples his peace as his final gift to them. That gift is meant to be shared. Jesus' peace is not simply a personal gift to make us feel calm and reduce our worries. Jesus' peace is a call to make peace a greater reality in our world.

Now many of us do not have the ability to change the course of international events. But each one of us, every day, makes choices that either foster or harm the peace around us. How do we deal with the members of our own family? Do we tease our brothers and sisters and fight with them? Do we speak to our spouse in a way that is unfair and hurtful? Jesus gives us his peace so that we can be peacemakers in our families, to treat the people in our lives with the respect and dignity they deserve. How do we deal with the people at school or work? Do we use our influence with our friends to put other people down? Do we use our authority or our knowledge on the job to make things easier for us at other people's expense? Jesus gives us his peace so that we can be peacemakers, so we can find ways to work together and cooperate with one another without leaving anyone behind.

Let's remember today: we can be peacemakers. We can take the peace that Jesus gives us and use it to move our neighborhoods, families, people we meet personally, one step closer to the kingdom of God.

Have a Blessed 6th Sunday of Easter 2025!

Fr. Rafal Ligenza,

Pastor — St. Joseph Catholic Church