

Monday

20 April 2020 - Sr Laura Lepori

Jn 20:19-23 – “Peace be with you.”

In the gospel according to John, the disciples were together the evening of “*the first day of the week.*” It was after the resurrection of the Lord. What were they discussing? Where they planning how to run away from Jerusalem? Where they planning how to go on without Jesus? We do not know. We know that they were together and were afraid.

Mary Magdalene, who had encountered the Risen Lord, had shared with them this deep and hope- and life-giving experience. However, fear was the dominant feeling they were experiencing in that house. They were afraid of the Jews. They were afraid that they too might end up being accused and condemned like Jesus.

Fear is always the feeling that emerges when there is a crisis, when uncertainty seems to compromise the future, when hope is suffocated. The disciples are afraid. So are we, who have to face the COVID19 pandemic. We are not only *locked down*, but also risk to *lock ourselves* in our fears.

Out of fear, the disciples locked the doors of the house. They were looking for safety, security. You, site managers and workers in the homeless shelters, have not *locked yourselves* in the house. You are reaching out. This does not mean that you have no fears. Certainly, some fears dwell in your hearts. Allow them to emerge, name them share them with your fellow workers as the disciples did among themselves.

The locked doors could not prevent the Risen Lord to come in the midst of the disciples, among them, to come close to them and tell them: “*Peace be with you.*” These are the first words that Jesus said to his disciples after his resurrection. He did not scold them or rebuke them because they were afraid, locked up in the house. His first gift for them was peace, not a simple peace but an all comprehensive and fulfilling ***shalom*** that could dissolve all the fears.

The Risen Lord grants the disciples the gift of *shalom*. He sends them and breaths on them the gift of the Holy Spirit. Now they are fully equipped to continue God’s mission in the world. The Risen Lord also comes to each one of us with his *shalom* and through the Holy Spirit sends us to reach out to others.

Let us set aside all our fears and embrace the mission with which the Lord is entrusting us today.

Prayer

Lord, peace is your gift to us
Open our eyes and our hearts
May we receive your peace in our lives.

Lord, help us to become instrument of your peace
Give us the strength to bring Your peace

Where human relations are broken
Where injustice is perpetrated.

May our lifestyle become peace, *shalom*.
Amen