

Reflections for the 6th Sunday of Easter

Acts 16:9-15

Revelation 21:10, 22-22:5

John 14:23-29

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Focus on the simple laws: be nonviolent, welcome the stranger

John has a vision of the heavenly city being lowered out of the sky. It has twelve gates, open to all the directions of the compass.

Inside this city, there's no temple. Instead the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb, they are the temple. It is their light that lights up the city.

So being nonviolent, unburdened by worry, and all our gates open to strangers, we can feel God's face shining on us. The Holy Spirit as the Gospel says, 'will teach you everything'.

Both readings have a message for the early Christians. Instead of accepting difficult laws around circumcision, they should focus on the simple ones: be nonviolent and welcome the stranger. These words are messages for us, a post Easter people.

We are called to be nonviolent to ourselves and others. We are called to keep our gates open and share a meal with Christ the stranger. Instead of a temple we have Jesus whose Peace will always be with us. And the Holy Spirit who will tell us what to do next.

Like Paul and the brothers in the first reading, we can endeavour to solve conflict through nonviolence, without the worry of carrying a knife, or the threat of a nuclear deterrent. In the meantime all we have to do is keep ourselves alive, waiting in the Peace of Christ for the Holy Spirit to tell us what to do, however long that takes.

We are called to give up the burdens and violence of immigration policies that prevent people working, accessing healthcare, living in peace. We are called to give up the rigid conventions of hospitality, the fear mongering by the media that makes it hard for us to open our doors to Christ the Stranger. Instead, as Easter people, we see a city whose gates are always open.