

Some of you have heard this story, but I'm going to tell it so that everyone has heard it from me. It takes place in the rectory kitchen. One night a few weeks ago I cooked some meat in the oven. After dinner, instead of scrubbing the pan clean, I soaked it in the sink overnight. The next morning I got up, walked into the kitchen, looked in the sink, and I found everything exactly as I had left it the night before except for one thing. Between the pan and the side of the sink, swimming in the dishwasher was a live bat. It couldn't get out. It kept trying to climb the sink, but just skidded back down into the water. I couldn't figure how to get it out without having the darn thing fly around the house. So I did the most manly thing I could think of. I called Tammy Mallen for help. Well at 7 in the morning somehow she had better things to do than drive over to the rectory and inspect a wet bat. So I waited around awhile and then went over to church a few minutes early for mass. Joe and Velma Seufferling and Loretta Cline were already here. I explained my predicament to them. Loretta came over to the kitchen, looked in the sink, jostled the pan, and asked for a pair of tongs. She squeezed the bat with the tongs, held it up out of the water, drained the sink, shoved the bat into a plastic bag, took it to the back yard and stepped on it. Now I know how to get rid of a bat swimming in dishwasher. Call Loretta, not Tammy. I'm not sure, but I think it was a Methodist bat that flew over here when it lost its home.

A fellow nearby had a more disturbing situation recently. He and his wife woke up one night when a strange man walked right into their bedroom and asked to use a toilet. They were able to call the police, who removed the man without any violence or loss of property. It's scary to discover that your home isn't as safe as you think it is.

Peace is hard to come by. You are entitled to peace at home, but you never know. An intruder could walk in. Your own family may greet you one day with secrecy or anger. Enemies half a world away want to explode nuclear weapons on cities and towns like ours. Floods and tornadoes endanger our homes. We enjoy peace when we have it, but the world cannot guarantee a stable peace.

Jesus said to his disciples at the Last Supper, "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give it to you. Do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid." Jesus promises a peace that will last, a peace the world cannot give because peace comes from God alone.

Whenever we celebrate the sacrament of confirmation in the Catholic Church, the minister anoints the candidate with chrism and says, "Peace be with you." When you are confirmed you receive the Holy Spirit as well as the Spirit's gift of peace.

Your peaceful life can be disturbed in the bedroom or the kitchen sink, but there is one way that you may secure peace, and that is through a stable relationship with Jesus. Jesus desires peace for us, and we will find it when we let go of false attachments and live for him alone.