

Monday Eastertide week 6

Monday 18 May 2020

First reading: Acts 16:11-15

The Lord opened Lydia's heart to accept what Paul was saying

Sailing from Troas we made a straight run for Samothrace; the next day for Neapolis, and from there for Philippi, a Roman colony and the principal city of that particular district of Macedonia. After a few days in this city we went along the river outside the gates as it was the sabbath and this was a customary place for prayer. We sat down and preached to the women who had come to the meeting. One of these women was called Lydia, a devout woman from the town of Thyatira who was in the purple-dye trade. She listened to us, and the Lord opened her heart to accept what Paul was saying. After she and her household had been baptised she sent us an invitation: 'If you really think me a true believer in the Lord,' she said 'come and stay with us'; and she would take no refusal.

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 149:1-6,9

The Lord takes delight in his people.

Sing a new song to the Lord,
his praise in the assembly of the faithful.
Let Israel rejoice in its Maker,
let Zion's sons exult in their king.
Let them praise his name with dancing
and make music with timbrel and harp.

For the Lord takes delight in his people.
He crowns the poor with salvation.
Let the faithful rejoice in their glory,
shout for joy and take their rest.
Let the praise of God be on their lips:
this honour is for all his faithful.
The Lord takes delight in his people.

Gospel: John 15:26-16:4

The Spirit of truth will be my witness

Jesus said to his disciples: 'When the Advocate comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who issues from the Father, he will be my witness. And you too will be witnesses, because you have been with me from the outset. 'I have told you all this that your faith may not be shaken. They will expel you from the synagogues, and

indeed the hour is coming when anyone who kills you will think he is doing a holy duty for God. They will do these things because they have never known either the Father or myself. But I have told you all this, so that when the time for it comes you may remember that I told you.'

Reflection

“And you too will be witnesses” (Jn. 15:27) says Jesus in today’s Gospel. The Gospel shows us that the Holy Spirit is our guide and “advocate” in witnessing to Christ. This sounds so much like a court of law! If Christianity were illegal, would our public lives be enough to condemn us; could we be found guilty by those who deny Christ? In other words, do we witness to Christ by what we do AND what we say. Many people are good and kind, and we are seeing a lot of this as a response to the current situation. As Christians we have been given the Holy Spirit to help, guide and lead us in proclaiming Christ. People will not come to faith in *Christ* only by witnessing our actions. Our words matter too.

In the first reading, we see how the Lord (the Holy Spirit) led Dorcas to faith in Christ by the preaching of St Paul. Aided by the Holy Spirit, she was excited and interested in what St Paul had to say.

In the Psalm, we read “sing a new song to the Lord” (Ps. 149:1). This Psalm is prayed by the Church in morning prayer on Sundays and on important feasts and solemnities. It is a Psalm of joy and celebration. A “new” song to the Lord can mean a number of things: each time someone comes to faith in Christ, he or she sings a “new” song to Him. However, each day, we too can sing a “new” song to the Lord. Let us ask the Holy Spirit to give us the grace and the words to be able to witness to Christ’s love, not only in what we do, but in what we say as well.

Carol Ann Harnett 18th May 2020