

May 9, 2020  
Saturday of the 4<sup>th</sup> Week of Easter

**Acts 13:44-52**

**John 14:7-14**

Today's Activities & Tasks

- Ready Daily Readings
- Reflection from Fr. Brian Johnson
- Prayer and Challenge for the Day
- A Mother's Love – *A Prayer of Our Lady of Fatima*

Reflection Easter Week 4 Saturday Acts 13:44-52 & John 14:7-14

Here we go again: what happens to Paul and Barnabas in today's first reading should sound familiar. That was exactly how the Pharisees treated Jesus. But before we address the ugliness of the synagogue leaders toward Paul and Barnabas, let's keep it positive. I am thrilled when I hear that opening line of Acts 13:44 "almost the whole city gathered to hear the word of the Lord". Paul & Barnabas were at Antioch in Pisidia, and almost the **whole city turned out!** Wow! If we could have such responses today! If any church is full, it is a great blessing. But how about a whole city turning out to pray together in the Name of Jesus. What a spiritual revival! If a public plaza or stadium could be full of good-hearted Christians seeking to better serve God's kingdom on earth, I am right in there with them. Of course, for such a large and varied group, the message would only be a generalized appeal about Jesus, but that is an awesome start! It is like when a parish says, "We have a problem, all our members can't fit into the church building at the same time"—but that is a good problem that can be solved with a larger building (or more mass times). But the synagogue leaders at the time of Paul and Barnabas' visit did not see it that way. Acts 13:45 says the leaders, "were filled with jealousy and with violent abuse contradicted what Paul said." So here we go, with power hungry leaders in the synagogue that can't stand not being the center of attention, they seek to ruin Paul and Barnabas. (Just like the detractors against Jesus that Pilate knew were moved mostly by envy of him--Matt 27:18). But staying positive, what do Paul and Barnabas do? They follow Jesus in every way, and recall Jesus' mission commands that when you are rejected, "leave that town, & shake the dust from your feet in testimony against them"(Luke 9:5). Acts 13:51 says Paul and Barnabas "shook the dust from their feet in protest against them and went to Iconium." But the pure love that motivates these missionaries is so refreshing, because when they were treated wrongly, they are just as much 'filled with joy and Holy Spirit'! You can't keep the good ones down! They know that there is too much good out there to be done, so they simply move on to the next challenge (of which there are no end to good challenges, right?). Paul and Barnabas do speak

the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15) to the leaders and everyone in the synagogue, but they can not force/control a spiritual issue to resolution that requires the free acceptance of human heart. So they simply say, "Let it be known that the Gospel of Jesus Christ has been preached here, and let each person answer for his/her life afterward(Acts 13:46-47). And off they go to the next Holy Spirit led location to continue preaching new life in Jesus' saving resurrection.

In the gospel Jesus shares a word about the witness of powerful works done by His disciples. In John 14:12, He says, Amen, amen, whoever believes in me will do the works that I do, and **will do greater ones than these**, because I am going to the Father." This is really an awesome pledge Jesus gives about his successors. Yet, the apostles do some rather awesome miracles. I am thinking of Paul healing the boy Eutyches who fell out of the window and died during a 'Breaking of Bread' ceremony in Acts 20:9-12, or Peter whose simple shadow cast upon a sick person along a street path had healing grace for them (Acts 5:15) or again Paul who healed some sick by merely placing cloths or towels that touched him upon them (Acts 19:11-12). Those are only a few of these 'greater works' Jesus spoke about can happen by grace and under His Name. By Jesus remaining with/in His followers, what else great and awesome may happen? I imagine we all might have miracles, great or small, to share if we were asked?

**Prayer for the Day:**

Provident Father, you sent your Son Jesus Christ to reconcile the world to yourself: We praise and bless you for those whom you have sent in the power of the Spirit to preach the Gospel to all nations. We thank you that in all parts of the earth a community of love has been gathered together by their prayers and labors, and that in every place your servants call upon your Name from times past and times presently; for Abraham, the father of believers, and Sarah his wife; for Moses, the lawgiver, and Aaron, the priest; for Miriam and Joshua, Deborah and Gideon, and Samuel with Hannah his mother; for Isaiah and all the prophets; for Mary, the mother of our Lord; for Peter, John, Paul Barnabas and all apostolic missionaries; for Mary and Martha, and Mary Magdalene; for Stephen, the first martyr, and all the martyrs and saints in every age, even those to come. Give us, as you gave to them, the hope of salvation and the promise of eternal life; through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen

**Challenge for the Day:**

Pray a litany of the Saints today, or the Confiteor prayer at mass that calls upon the Blessed Mother, all the angels and saints to keep us in grace and faithful to Christ.

## **A Mother's Love -** **A Prayer of Our Lady of Fatima**

We praise you, Lord, and bless you, For in a time of horrific war And  
pandemic plague, You sent us your mother, Our Lady of Fatima.  
We sing praises to you, For even in times of sorrow and fear The Earth  
is still touched by one such as she. And we are reminded, Knowing that  
whatever war visits itself upon us, Whatever deprivations, Whatever

want, Whatever illness, Whatever calamity endured by humankind That  
may cause us to look to the sky and despair, That your children do not  
toil in this world apart from your grace, That our prayers are not unheard

And we do not go forth without a mother's love.

Keep us devoted to you, O Lord, Devoted in our prayer, our words and  
our acts, That all souls in this world may know your compassion, peace  
and mercy, That all souls who have departed this world may find  
salvation.

Lucia, Jacinta and Francisco, pray for us. Our Lady of Fatima, pray for  
us.

Amen.

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