

May 8, 2020
Friday of the 4th Week of Easter

Acts 13:26-33

John 14:1-6

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 Friday Acts 13:26-33 & John 14:1-6

Today is practice! Our gospel is the first six verses of this Sunday's gospel. I guess it is a little preview. So maybe I won't go too deep into because that would be Sunday's homily, and I will save it for then. Okay, truthfully, I will write it by then. I don't have it down yet, so I am open to suggestions, ideas and illustrations. I welcome any scripture ideas and homily helps!

The Father's House? Where, on earth, is the Father's House? I say, "Yes, it is partly-the front door landing is among us wherever Jesus is served and followed faithfully. Why? Because Jesus is the 'Way' to the Father. At Wednesday night's bible lesson, I shared a quote from St Catherine of Siena (one of the four women doctors of Church with St Teresa Lisieux, St Teresa Avila and St Hildegard of Bingen). St Catherine wrote, "The Way to heaven is heaven, because Jesus said 'I am the Way, the Truth and the Life'". I think St Catherine is saying that as we seek heaven by grace and our fidelity, we can taste, glimpse and experience something of heaven all along the way to heaven. To genuinely be seeking and coming near to Jesus, it is all grace (here or there). But I also think St Catherine's idea of sensing something of heaven through a lived sanctity here on earth is similar to what people mean when they say things like 'Life is a highway' (now is that song commercial stuck in your head) or that 'life is not a destination but a journey'. Maybe the point is that the grace of heavenly beatitude does not have to be postponed until some final day of revelation. We do pray in every Lord's Prayer for God's will to be done 'on earth-as it is in heaven'. "As it is in" implies similar graces here, as will be there! But again, Jesus tells us He is the Way to the Father's House so by siding up along with Him, we are there wherever we are, or as close to there, as we will ever be aware.

The first reading from Acts contains part of an extended sermon Paul gave in a synagogue in Antioch. What jumps out at me from Paul's sermon is how important the written holy word is to him, and how deeply the gospel of Jesus Christ draws from the Jewish scripture. Notice Paul begins by saying his message is a 'word of salvation' (Acts 13:26). Verse 27 he

points out the Messiah's coming was foretold in the "oracles of the prophets that are read sabbath after sabbath". In Verse 29 Paul highlights that the crucifying actions against Jesus were 'all accomplished as was written about him". And verse 33, Paul concludes that God fulfilled the resurrection of His Son Jesus "as it is written in the second psalm". Paul is going to great length to show the scriptural foundation of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and that Christ's redemptive acts (death & resurrection) are in continuity with the prophetic tradition of the ancient Hebrew Holy Script. This desire of Paul's to show himself and the gospel to be in line with Jewish tradition can be seen at the beginning of his sermon where he invokes 'Abraham' and describes them all as 'children in the family of Abraham'. I find interesting that Paul himself will become part of 'written tradition' as his letters are preserved as holy scripture, and the missionary actions of all the apostles be handed on to us as 'fulfillment of God's prophecies'. Thank God, it goes on and on, until even us today. We are part of that tradition fulfillment as we keep and hold the faith professed & the gospel proclaimed by those first disciples of Jesus!

Prayer for the Day:

For the Mission of the Church: O God, you have made of one blood all the peoples of the earth, and sent your blessed Son to preach peace to those who are far off and to those who are near: Grant that people everywhere may seek after you and find you, bring the nations into your fold, pour out your Spirit upon all flesh and remember the multitudes who have been created in your image but have not known the redeeming work of our Savior Jesus Christ. Grant that, by the prayers and labors of your holy Church, they may be brought to know and worship you as you have been revealed in your Son; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Challenge for the Day:

Here is how we are in touch with Christian tradition and Christian ancestors. Take an extra moment today to recall your baptismal name saint and your confirmation name saint. Refresh yourself about them or summarize a few details of their life and how they influence you today (is there a 'story' about why you chose or were given the saint names as patrons?)

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.

Copyright © 2017, Catholic Relief Services, www.crs.org. Prayer