

May 19, 2020
Tuesday of the 6th Week of Easter

Acts 16:22-34

John 16:5-11

Today's Activities & Tasks

- Read Today's Readings
- Gospel Reflection from Fr. Brian Johnson
- Prayer and Challenge for the Day
- Public Celebration of Mass will begin May 20th. Please follow the link below for general information. More details about our parish will be published soon.
- Video: Interview with Fr. Mike Schmitz

Easter Week 6 Tuesday Reflection Acts 16:22-34 & John 16:5-11

Why the caged bird sings! Sure, read the autobiography of the great poet Maya Angelou, but we can also learn from caged birds singing with Paul and Silas (Acts 16:25) in today's reading. Remarkable, that a person can be stripped of the freedoms of movement and any personal schedule in prison, and yet find so much to celebrate and still sing songs of praise. Before I go in more depth about this Acts reading, if you want to know what is in Paul's heart to make him sing in prison, check out a quick reading of his letter to the Philippians. He reveals his spiritual secret there. And while reading Philippians, number the times he uses the words 'joy' and 'rejoice' keeping in mind that he is in PRISON. But back to today. Paul and Silas could feel so bummed by being locked up and prevented from preaching Christ in the streets (or riverside from yesterday), and they may have been in cells with 'dangerous' felons. But remember that by universally recognized international law today, Paul is guilty of 'crimes against humanity' for his religious persecution and execution of political prisoners. But, Paul realizes that by being in prison, God wants him and Silas to minister there. 'Don't Quench the Spirit' (1 Thessalonians 5:9). So, don't let a good opportunity go to waste. Imprisoned then, Paul and Silas begin a prison ministry from the inside! Like good inculturation and evangelization, people are more likely to listen to someone with similar experiences or background. Acts 16:25 says Paul was singing and giving testimony to faith in Christ 'at midnight' and that the other prisoners 'were listening'! Midnight? No rest for the saved! And what does such powerful rejoicing to God accomplish but a miracle similar to the 'fall of the walls of Jericho' (Joshua 6:1-27). Here the earth quakes, the doors become loose and open and the chains break free from the prisoners

(Acts 16:26). Good, oh, but not for the jailer responsible and duty. So, he begins to end his life instead of face the consequences of answering for the 'jailbreak'. Until, Paul yells out in verse 28 that they do not want freedom at the expense of his life, and that even without chains they are happy to keep singing in jail! This reminds me of the saying from Holy Week, that it was not the nails through his hands and feet that kept Jesus on the cross for our salvation. No, nothing forced him to stay there. Jesus stayed on the cross out of pure love of us! And Paul and Silas stay in jail out of pure love of the jailer and the other workers. They could go free, but they choose to freely stay and start a new level of testimony about Christ to the Jailer and other guards! And such novelty in evangelization approaches bears fruit in the jailer's whole household being baptized, becoming practicing Christians! (In Acts 16:35, we will hear that while all this excitement is going on in jail, the magistrates were at the same time deciding to release Paul and Silas anyway, to get them out of their town). God operates on all fronts and multiple levels all the time (Why do we ever underestimate our awesome God-yet we do all the time?) But I also want to point out the blessed response and thanksgiving act of the jailer to Paul and Silas for having received the faith in Jesus Christ from them. Acts 16:33 says that the jailer "took them into his house at that hour of the night and bathed their wounds." Accepting and encountering Christ through Paul, the jailer responds with acts of love in return. He brings the inmates to his home to comfort them, feed them and care for their wounds. This response of showing gratitude through serving others, is typical of those overwhelmed by God's grace, like Simon's mother-in-law (Mark 1:31), the forgiven woman (Luke 7:44-47) and the Gerasene Demoniac (Mark 5:18). When we realize all that God has done for us, how can we not sing even when caged (maybe I shouldn't have brought that subject up in this virus time!), or how can we fail to serve others knowing how sacrificially Jesus serves us all the time? Jesus who washed his servants' feet (the jailer imitated that gesture serving the inmates) sets the model of joyful charity for us.

Prayer for the Day:

Servant Lord, whose touch transforms us and leads us to service. Reach out your hand to heal and make us whole; reach out your hand to lift us up to rejoice always with you, regardless of our discomfort or any inconvenient hardship; reach out your hand that together our hands may bring your hope and healing in this broken and suffering world that does not know you. May we help to introduce you to it by our acts of loving service in Your Name. Amen

Challenge for the Day:

Perform a random act of kindness for someone as an offering of thanksgiving for God's gifts received every day (every minute).

Returning to Public Mass

Bishop Medley has released a statement about the Diocese of Owensboro returning to public Mass. St. Pius X Parish in

Calvert City will have public Mass starting Wednesday, May 20, 2020 at 8:00am.

More information will be given to our parishioners in the next few days. Information will be emailed to you, posted on our Facebook page and added to our parish's website. Parishioners without email will be contacted via phone call.

Please be patient as parish staff and volunteers prepare the church in accordance to the Bishop's guidelines. Please read or view Bishop Medley's announcement from our Diocese's website:

Returning to Public Mass Announcement

Video: Fr. Mike Schmitz, Where's is God in COVID-19 on The Elijah K. Johnson Robert

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D9YoJ7LMDvw>