

May 16, 2020
Friday of the Fifth Week of Easter

Acts 16:1-10

John 15:18-21

Today's Activities & Tasks

- Read Daily Readings
- 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.

Reflection Easter Week 5 Saturday Acts 16:1-10 & John 15:18-21

Now, isn't that interesting? Acts 16: 3 says, "On account of the Jews of that region, Paul had him (Timothy) ***circumcised***, for they all knew that his father was a Greek". Paul who had just caused the convention of the Jerusalem Council to have the old custom of circumcision ended, now has a new fellow minister circumcised! So, should we circumcise or not? Yes, and no. Well, keep in mind, two possibilities: 1) The ruling from the council is so recent, likely it is not widely promulgated and received yet, so Paul 'goes along to get along' to not appear to be pushing his own agenda (self-gain). And/Or, Paul is just practicing a spiritual principle, that he lays out elsewhere in his letters saying, *'all things may be lawful, but not all are beneficial'* (1 Corinthians 10:23 & 1 Corinthians 6:12). Paul means that one may be right, but forcing one's position only undermines one's greater goal. Paul does not want to unnecessarily trouble the waters (though he is right) only to make a point or prove his case. He invokes that principle of accommodation for the sake of not creating a 'bad witness' or even scandal to a 'young conscience'. One may be due some benefit, but forego it for the sake of someone else. The case in 1 Cor 10:27-28 was about eating food from Idol Temples or not, and Paul seems to settle on the position that if attention is drawn to where the meat came from, then abstain from it, but if no big deal is made, then offer thanks and receive. But again, if it becomes an issue, then let it go! Paul seems to be doing this with Timothy. Timothy does not need to be circumcised

according to the Jerusalem Council, but if some people would reject Timothy otherwise, then go ahead and perform the outdated custom for the sake of unity and the good of order. Paul goes through such a time again in Acts 21:26 when he submits to an unnecessary 'purification ritual at the Temple' to help some other converts also be better accepted by the Temple authorities. All out of love and charity; what he goes through for the sake of furthering Christ's name and the good of those he serves!

But another motive 2) may also be at work. People naturally expect more out of their leaders. Jesus had taught that *"Much will be required of the person entrusted with much, and still more will be demanded of the person entrusted with more"* (Luke 12:48), and that *'your holiness must surpass that of the Pharisees'* (Matt 5:20). So, to remove any possible stumbling block to Timothy's future ministry with Paul, he goes ahead with the extra mile and submits to circumcision to fulfill a 'higher righteousness'. Timothy steps up to take away any future excuse someone may throw up to ignore his teaching and message. Don't we humans, so easily find convenient reasons to listen and follow someone's message or not? So, Timothy can say even though the new ruling was in place, I still was commissioned 'by the old book' or 'by the scroll'!

Absolutely, Paul struggled with how best to evangelize and grow the church. He daily had to 'discern' how God wished him to serve, and where God wished him to go. Paul often felt impelled to be or go everywhere to share the good news about Jesus. But of course, he could only be at one place at a time and with one person or group at a time. Today's reading speaks about how the Spirit led him (I'm sure loud and clear sometimes, but also other times, not so clear and loud). Acts 16:6 says that at one time when he was about to move to new ground, he was "prevented by the holy Spirit from preaching the message in the province of Asia." Also, in Acts 16:7, he and Timothy, "they tried to go on into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them". The plan and mission was God's, not Paul's. Paul had to stay in close touch with the Spirit to know where God wanted him and how he was to serve the Church. That is the art of discernment, and it is conducted by the Spirit. We have to keep to prayer and always seek counsel to remain 'in the Spirit'!

Prayer for the Day:

O God of all days, help me discern on this day what is your will and how best to serve you. Give me an experience of your heart. Draw me deep into your very being, into the core of your love for me, others, and the world. Give me a glimpse

of others the way you see others: loving them, forgiving them, and delighting in the way they give glory to God through their very existence. Help me to discern from the heart of all deep affection so that I too might be a useful vessel of your love in the world. Amen.

Challenge for the Day:

What does God want me to do for Him today? Or maybe better asked, How can I serve God best today? Give God at least five minutes of complete silence (Is that possible?) for Him to communicate your mission today. If nothing comes, ask someone else you trust (discerningly) what God told them to tell you to do?

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 on Sunday, May 17, and in the next few days. 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**