

Sunday, May 22, 2022 – Sixth Sunday of Easter

First Reading: Acts 16:9-15

6-8 – They went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia. When they had come opposite Mysia, they attempted to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them; so, passing by Mysia, they went down to Troas.

Even though God was closing doors, Paul and Silas did not stop.

When has God closed a door for you? Did that tempt you to stop?

How do you feel about – do you relate to - the saying, "When God closes a door, He opens a window," or, "When God closes one door, He opens another"?

9-10 - During the night Paul had a vision: there stood a man of Macedonia pleading with him and saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." When he had seen the vision, we immediately tried to cross over to Macedonia, being convinced that God had called us to proclaim the good news to them.

This begins the first of the "we" passages in Acts, where the pronoun changes from "they" to "we."

Many think that this is because the author Luke joins the journey at this point.

Luke's being careful to distinguish between when he was along and when he was not along is a strong argument for the reliability of the account.

Many also believe that Luke was the man of Macedonia.

For Paul and Silas it was moving from one Roman province to another. For us it is the spread of the Gospel from one continent to another – Asia to Europe.

What have been the "major advancement moments" in your life?

Who has been your "man of Macedonia"?

11-12 - We set sail from Troas and took a straight course to Samothrace, the following day to Neapolis, and from there to Philippi, which is a leading city of the district of Macedonia and a Roman colony.

The significance of Philippi's being a leading city of the district and a Roman colony.

Philippi was also a place where retired Roman soldiers would go to live.

12-13 – We remained in this city for some days. On the sabbath day we went outside the gate by the river, where we supposed there was a place of prayer; and we sat down and spoke to the women who had gathered there.

A place of prayer along a river rather than a Jewish synagogue

14 - A certain woman named Lydia, a worshiper of God, was listening to us; she was from the city of Thyatira and a dealer in purple cloth.

Purple cloth – Lydia was a dealer in very high-end fashion

Does this help explain why the church at Philippi was a major source of financial support for Paul?

Philippians 4: 10-14

2 Corinthians 8: 1-7

14 - The Lord opened her heart to listen eagerly to what was said by Paul.

Cf. Martin Luther's explanation to the Third Article of the Apostles Creed

15 - When she and her household were baptized, she urged us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come and stay at my home." And she prevailed upon us.

The first recorded Christian baptism in Europe

Second Reading: Revelation 21:10, 22--22:5

22: 1-2 – Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb, through the middle of the street of the city. On either side of the river is the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, producing its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.

Genesis 2: 9, 3: 22-24 - All that was lost when Adam and Eve were expelled from the Garden of Eden has been regained.

Gospel: John 14:23-29

John 13-17 – almost one-fourth of a twenty-one-chapter book all took place in one evening. That says a lot about the significance the Gospel writer John placed upon that one evening.

The other Gospels tell about Jesus's instituting the Lord's Supper.

John tells about several other things –

John 13 – Jesus' washing His disciples' feet – the command to love one another (Maundy Thursday)

John 14 – Let not your hearts be troubled – In my Father's house are many dwelling places – I am the way, the truth, and the life

John 14: 31 – Rise, let us be on our way.

John 15 – I am the vine, you are the branches (were Jesus and His disciples passing through a vineyard on their way to the Garden of Gethsemane?)

John 17 – The High Priestly Prayer – the longest recorded prayer of Jesus in the Bible – the Gospel reading for next Sunday is from John 17

John 18: 1 – After Jesus had spoken these words, he went out with his disciples across the Kidron valley to a place where there was a garden, which he and his disciples entered

23 - Those who love me will keep my word, and my Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them.

24 - Whoever does not love me does not keep my words; and the word that you hear is not mine, but is from the Father who sent me.

25-26 - I have said these things to you while I am still with you. But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you.

27 - Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.

28-29 - You heard me say to you, "I am going away, and I am coming to you." I have told you this before it occurs, so that when it does occur, you may believe.