

Christ Our Hope Catholic Church

Faith in Laity Corner



Monday, May 20, 2019

Reading: Acts 14:21-27

5th Week of Easter

Expanding His Ministry

When the *word ministry* is stated, one tends to identify with some far off difficult task, that will consume ones' life. Yes, and to some extent that notion is true. One with a *ministry* has a 'passion' for it and it becomes a life-long mission if one is serious enough. We are all called to expand our *ministry* to others. One of the clear objectives of the *Jesus encounter* was the desire, passion and commitment to want to spread His Name throughout the whole earth. Early Catholics understood this as their mission, which they took seriously; one they had a solemn promise to fulfilled. It was understood that the Name of Jesus needed to reach the ends of the earth. It is necessary to have to suffer measures of hardship and difficulty to expand the ministry of Jesus Christ.

*“It is necessary for us to undergo many hardships
to enter the kingdom of God.” (Acts 14:22)*

There were constant warnings from Jesus that there was no glory without the sacrifice and pain of the journey; Jesus' followers were prepared for this journey; they were aware that it would not be easy. Many did not expect to lose their lives so soon; but the

conviction of what they had experienced with knowing Jesus, who made such an impact in their lives that they felt an obligation to continue in His Name.

“They had proclaimed the good news to that city and made a considerable number of disciples” (Acts 14:21)

They realized that when things were done in His Name. Their mission was clear and the goals were set and objectives were achieved. They became powerful witnesses to others and the Church rapidly grew.

As many students from all levels of education are in the midst of graduating, one is reminded that their achievement did not come without sacrifices. They have come to understand what it is like to have goals set and to strive towards them, in whatever way they can- these however are only academic goals... Before you lies -your salvation goals, the fruits of which will last forever.

The early Christians learned to latch on to the secret weapon for strength- prayer and fasting.... they used it with a purpose and with success.

“For them in each church and, with prayer and fasting, commended them to the Lord...” (Acts 14:23)

They lived lives became exemplary and they became living witnesses to what the faith stood for. God was able to use their human strength to do extraordinary acts of faith and prophecy,

“In the Lord in whom they had put their faith.” (Acts 14:23)

What is missing today? Do we allow ourselves to become instruments of His Power and use prayer and fasting for the spiritual strength it provides? How have our lives become a witness to others? Are we sharing our faith witnessing with others? The early Christian did as part of their faith building exercises.

“They called the church together and reported what God had done with them and how he had opened the door of faith.” (Acts 14:27)

There was success in bringing Christians to a faith where the new converts were more than likely be killed, or thrown to wild animals; yet they were willing to overlook the cost of their lives to witness in the Name of Jesus Christ.

Christians today are still working in the field doing God’s Will and reaching out to serve others in their community in many places in the world. Yet, their numbers are not increasing as in times of long ago; are those of us in our Church truly committed to fasting, prayer, service and spreading the faith? I guess, too many of us have become lukewarm, this is not the time for half measures our world needs radically committed faith and a willingness to step outside of our ‘I’s and push for the ‘we’ and ‘us’. Let us find ways to witness to our families, friends, church, neighborhood and our world.... People are dying an eternal death, because there are not enough witnesses to reach them.

Let us pray for children who are being abused, victims of gangs, warfare, the isolation of their electronic world, those at our American borders, in marginalized communities, where witnesses and hope is hard to find.

We pray for our mothers who have died, may God give them His peace and light.

Faith in Laity Corner is a weekly sharing of Holy Week readings written by Brenda Chee Wah,
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Your remarks, questions and comments can be emailed to faithinlaity@gmail.com

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