



ALL SAINTS'

CHURCH

"Our mission is to bring the good news of Jesus Christ's love to our entire community through traditional Anglo-Catholic worship, fellowship, outreach, and Christian formation."

Our Vision: *"We strive to be a haven of healing, reconciliation, joy and peace in service to our wider community and beyond, so that our example in prayer and practice may reflect Christ's love for us all."*

THIS SUNDAY — May 1 & Beyond

"God Wonders Beyond Our Ken"



The reading from the Book of Acts of the Apostles (The Book of Acts of the Holy Spirit, as our former Bishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, liked to call it) this Sunday brings us one of the accounts of St. Paul's conversion. Two other accounts of this event appear in the same book and also in Paul's letter to the Galatians.

One may wonder how come that a person who was totally and stubbornly convinced that those who followed Jesus' Way were enemies of God's true religion (Orthodox Judaism, in his view), and relentlessly persecuted and imprisoned Jesus' followers with the purpose to wipe them off the face of the earth, ended up being the person who did more than any other Apostle to spread out Jesus' New Way of Love throughout the known world of his time.

This is not easy to understand, especially when we have been told that God will never force anyone to believe, simply because He always respects the freedom of choice with

which He endowed us.

I once asked my Theology professor at the Seminary this question, because the story of Paul's conversion has always intrigued me. It seems to contradict the principle of free will in human beings.

What he answered did not sound particularly convincing at the time, but reflecting upon his words later, I have to admit that he may have had a point there.

What my professor hinted was that even though the story seems to depict a sudden conversion on the spot, practically forced upon him by Jesus, Paul may have been subconsciously--and maybe quite consciously, even though he did not openly admit it--ruminating that there was something particularly special about the way these followers of Jesus remained faithful even if they faced death for their cause (he had witnessed Stephen's stoning to death and approved it).

He may have also heard stories about how these people loved one another and shared all their possessions in common, and how signs of healing and great wonders abounded among them.

All this may have had a powerful impact on Paul's mind, and this may have prepared the way for the new thing that Jesus Himself was about to do with his life.

In the conversation with Ananias—the disciple Jesus chooses to send to Paul so that he may recover his sight and be baptized in Jesus' Way of Love—Jesus makes it clear he was well aware of all that Paul had done against His followers, but precisely because He knows that Paul is such a relentless follower of what he is convinced of, He knew that once his spiritual sight was opened to God's truth Paul would be the greatest of all evangelists among the Gentiles and even the Jews.

It would bring him great tribulation and suffering, first among his fellow apostles, because they doubted the authenticity of his conversion and were suspicious of his acceptance of the uncircumcised, and later among those first converts, who wanted to keep their old ways, and the Orthodox Jewish leaders who opposed him fiercely and finally managed to convince the Roman Empire to condemn him to death.

Even when he never met the earthly Jesus and was not a part of the original core group, the truth is that we would not have even half of the New Testament we know at present

if it were not for Paul, and we have no idea what the Christian Church would have been without him.

As Jesus told Nicodemus, the Spirit does blow wherever and however He wishes, and in these stories of the first years of Jesus' movement, put together in writing by Luke the Evangelist, anything and everything can surprise us and make us ponder about the great wonders that the Holy Spirit can also work in the midst of us, even now.

Father Carlos E. Expósito

Readings for The Third Sunday of Easter

Acts 9:1-19a Revelation 5:6-14 Psalm 33:1-11 John 21:1-14

CALENDAR

Note: We are worshipping in our historic church. The service will also be on Zoom. The service time is 10am. Tuesday Noon Mass and Friday Morning Prayer are held in All Saints' St. Mary Chapel.

SUNDAY The Third Sunday of Easter

10:00am Mass in All Saints' Church

Join Zoom Meeting from our web site at www.allsaintschurch.org

Recording of Mass available before noon at www.allsaintschurch.org

Christian Formation and First Communion Instruction for Children

Ages 5-12 in the Parish Hall from 10:00am-10:45am

A Spanish Mass will be held on the first, second, fourth (and fifth) Sundays each month at 1pm. Everyone is welcome.

TUESDAY Noon Mass in St. Mary Chapel

THURSDAY Spanish Class 1:00pm to 3:00pm in the Flower Room. Taught by Fr. Carlos

FRIDAY 10:00am Morning Prayer in St. Mary Chapel

SATURDAY: Societies of Mary Day of Devotion at 11am in St. Mary Chapel

SUNDAY The Fourth Sunday of Easter

10:00am Mass in All Saints' Church

Join Zoom Meeting from our web site at www.allsaintschurch.org

Recording of Mass available before noon at www.allsaintschurch.org

Christian Formation and First Communion Instruction for Children

Ages 5-12 in the Parish Hall from 10:00am-10:45am

Christian Formation every second and fourth Sunday of the month at 11:30am Studying *Sacred Earth, Sacred Soul* by John Philip Newel – Rector's Study

A Spanish Mass will be held on the first, second, fourth (and fifth) Sundays each month at 1pm. Everyone is welcome.

OUR CORE VALUES:

- Welcoming strangers like old friends
- Embracing the Anglo-Catholic tradition
- Being dependable members of a caring community
- Respecting each other's differences
- Being faithful stewards of God's gift
- Remembering that God loves everyone unconditionally