

Notes for Next Sunday

Sixth Sunday of Easter

The Point of this Week's Readings

First Reading (Acts 16:9-15). Paul and his companions had been ministering in Phrygia and Galatia. One night when Paul was asleep he had a vision. It was a man of Macedonia begging him to come to Macedonia to help them. Paul and his party traveled to Macedonia to preach the gospel. While in Macedonia they find a Roman colony. When the Sabbath comes they go down to the river side which was a customary place to pray. Also there are women which include Lydia. She was a successful business woman who dealt in purple cloth. The Lord opens her heart and she is believes, is baptized and invites Paul's party to come her place to stay for the time they were in the area.

Second Reading (Revelation 21:9-14, 21-27). Both of these sections are a description of the Holy City of Jerusalem which is in reality is heaven. Using images of the most precious jewels at that time, heaven is pictured as a place of incredible brilliance. The brightness found there does not need the light from the sun and the moon. The glory of the God gives it light and Jesus the Lamb is its lamp. It will be a place of complete safety so much so that none of the gates will ever be shut. Nothing evil or sinful will be anywhere in it. The most comforting part is that through our faith in Christ as our Savior, our name will be written in the book of life. This means that we will spend eternity with God in heaven.

Gospel (John 16:23-33). Jesus is still comforting His disciples upon His impending death and resurrection. Jesus announces that He will speak more clearly about His soon-to-come Passion. The disciples acknowledge that His plain speaking is helpful to them and helps them to believe that Jesus is God's Son. Jesus goes on to describe what will happen when He is taken captive and crucified. While they will leave Him He will not be alone because the Father will be His companion. Always looking out for the best interests of His disciples, He tells them that trouble will be a part of their life on earth. But, He also reminds them that He has overcome the world and will there in the time of their problems.

For more in-depth commentary on each reading, read the notes found after each text below.

FIRST READING – Acts 16:9-15

⁹ During the night Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia standing and begging him, “Come over to Macedonia and help us.” ¹⁰ After Paul had seen the vision, we got ready at once to leave for Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them. ¹¹ From Troas we put out to sea and sailed straight for Samothrace, and the next day on to Neapolis. ¹² From there we traveled to Philippi, a Roman colony and the leading city of that district of Macedonia. And we stayed there several days. ¹³ On the Sabbath we went outside the city gate to the river, where we expected to find a place of prayer. We sat down and began to speak to the women who had gathered there. ¹⁴ One of those listening was a woman named Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth from the city of Thyatira, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul's message. ¹⁵ When she and the members of her household were baptized, she invited us to her home. “If you consider me a believer in the Lord,” she said, “come and stay at my house.” And she persuaded us.

16:9-15 The Holy Spirit has prevented Paul from going to Asia or Bithynia (16:6–7), but now in Troas he is summoned by the Spirit and sent to Macedonia, in Europe, on God's mission to proclaim the Gospel. “It is at least clear what Luke intends here: the comments make obvious God's guidance on the way to Europe.

16:9 vision. Most probably a dream. Dreams carried far more significance in the ancient world than today, and the Bible records repeated instances where they served as a vehicle for communication between God and people. (LL)

16:13 a place of prayer. Ten men were needed to form a synagogue and Phillippi had only a small Jewish population. Places erected near water so that the ceremonial washings prescribed in the Jewish law could be performed. (PBC)

16:14 dealer of purple cloth. The expensive dye made a profitable trade. (TLSB)

16:14 worshiper of God. Lydia was a Gentile who, like Cornelius (see 10:2), believed in the true God and followed the moral teachings of Scripture. She had not, however, become a full convert to Judaism. (CSB)

16:15 she and members of her household were baptized. As is common in Acts, Baptism is granted immediately and is bestowed on the entire household along with its head (cf 10:44–48). *household.* Term includes children and servants. (TLSB)

16:15 stay at my house. Her home became their headquarters for mission work in Philippi. Her household provided the nucleus of a congregation in that city. (PBC)

SECOND READING – Revelation 21:9-14, 21-27

⁹ One of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and said to me, “Come, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.” ¹⁰ And he carried me away in the Spirit to a mountain great and high, and showed me the Holy City, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God. ¹¹ It shone with the glory of God, and its brilliance was like that of a very precious jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal. ¹² It had a great, high wall with twelve gates, and with twelve angels at the gates. On the gates were written the names of the twelve tribes of Israel. ¹³ There were three gates on the east, three on the north, three on the south and three on the west. ¹⁴ The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. ²¹ The twelve gates were twelve pearls, each gate made of a single pearl. The great street of the city was of pure gold, like transparent glass. ²² I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. ²³ The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp. ²⁴ The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it. ²⁵ On no day will its gates ever be shut, for there will be no night there. ²⁶ The glory and honor of the nations will be brought into it. ²⁷ Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb’s book of life.

21:11 the glory of the Lord. When Christ appears, the saints will be glorified and given resurrected bodies like Christ’s own (Php 3:20–21). Thus, both heaven and its citizens will reflect the divine majesty. (TLSB)

21:21 city was of pure gold. Gold indicates that the city and its main street convey the supreme royalty of God’s glory. (CC pp. 616-17)

21:22 did not see a temple. God gave the tabernacle and temples in order to mediate His presence on earth. In heaven, however, His people will see Him face-to-face and experience Him directly. Thus, a temple will be unnecessary. (TLSB)

21:24 nations walk by its light. Emphasizes the complete fulfillment of God's plan to save all people (cf Rv 7:9). This suggests the transformation rather than the annihilation of the old orders. (TLSB)

GOSPEL – John 16:23-33

²³ In that day you will no longer ask me anything. I tell you the truth, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. ²⁴ Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete. ²⁵ “Though I have been speaking figuratively, a time is coming when I will no longer use this kind of language but will tell you plainly about my Father. ²⁶ In that day you will ask in my name. I am not saying that I will ask the Father on your behalf. ²⁷ No, the Father himself loves you because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God. ²⁸ I came from the Father and entered the world; now I am leaving the world and going back to the Father.” ²⁹ Then Jesus' disciples said, “Now you are speaking clearly and without figures of speech. ³⁰ Now we can see that you know all things and that you do not even need to have anyone ask you questions. This makes us believe that you came from God.” ³¹ “You believe at last!”^a Jesus answered. ³² “But a time is coming, and has come, when you will be scattered, each to his own home. You will leave me all alone. Yet I am not alone, for my Father is with me. ³³ “I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”

16:23 you will no longer ask me anything. Seems to mean asking for information (rather than asking in prayer), which would not be necessary after the resurrection. (CSB)

16:29 without figures of speech. The disciples thought that they understood, but their understanding remained inadequate. (TLSB)

16:30 believe that you came from God. Although their faith was still deficient, the disciples believed that Jesus' knowledge proved His divine origin. (TLSB)

16:32 each to his own home. The disciples would temporarily abandon Jesus in the crisis to come. (TLSB)