

Fifth Saturday of Easter ~ 5/12

"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. (Acts 16:7-8)

What was wrong with Bithynia? Or was anything wrong? Perhaps they were needed more in Troas, or maybe the roads to Bithynia were washed out making it impossible to get there. We are not given that information. The apostles wanted to go there but it just seems that it was not meant to be. The Spirit of Jesus didn't want them to go to Bithynia. The author of Acts never explains what was going on with Bithynia.

When Pope Pius XII died and the Cardinals came together to pick a new pope the general feel was that it might be best to pick an older pope, one who wouldn't shake things up too much and who, frankly, wouldn't live too long. By the time this older man died perhaps it would become obvious which one of the younger cardinals would be best suited for an extended pontificate. God had other ideas. Not only did this little elderly man have some fresh ideas but he also had just enough energy to push open some of the old and rusted windows of the church. John the XXIII did not reign long but he reigned well.

A rational choice is not always God's choice. The obvious solution does not always fit into God's plan. And when we think that we have it all figured out, is exactly when God turns things up side down.

Often we make choices that come from a deep desire to please God, but sometimes the results do not bear any fruit or our plans are interrupted by other circumstances in life. We have difficulty understanding the 'why' since the path seemed so clear to us. These are the times when we need to let go and let God lead. Perhaps Jesus is preparing new challenges and new graces for our journey but we really don't know.

The disciples wanted to go to Bithynia but that didn't happen, and they were wise enough to realize that it was because God had something else in mind. The cardinals had no idea that they had picked the right man but for the wrong reason and the church is better for it. So the next time you are blocked from taking the road you thought was best, be prepared to discover the path God has in store.

Questions for Reflection

- 1. What plans have I made that were changed because God had other ideas?*
- 2. When things don't turn out the way I wanted, how do I react? What should I be looking for?*

Prayer: Jesus, help me to follow Your path even if it diverges from the one that I want to take.