

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

In the Acts of the Apostles, we read that the word of God continued to spread and grow. The risen Lord through his apostles/disciples built his church.

“And when they had arrived, they called the church together and reported what God had done with them and how he had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles” (Acts 14: 27)

The first reading describes the latter part of the first missionary journey of saint Paul.

Having evangelized southern Galatia and firmly established the Christian church there, Paul and Barnabas returned to Antioch in Syria, from where they had set out and reported what God had done with them and how he had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles.

The Gentiles converted when Paul and Barnabas preached the word of God to them. They allowed themselves to be shaped by its transforming grace. They made a total turn-around of faith.

In his apostolic letter “*Porta Fidei*” (The Door of Faith) Pope Benedict XVI writes, “The ‘door of faith’ (Acts 14:27) is always open for us, ushering us into the life of communion with God and offering entry into the Church...To enter through that door is to set out on a journey that lasts a lifetime.”

According to Pope Benedict XVI, faith is choosing to stand with the Lord so as to live with him. Our choice to stand with him should last our lifetime. It is the lifelong companion that makes it possible to perceive ever anew, the marvels that God works for us. It commits

every one of us to become a living sign of the presence of the Risen Lord in the world.

The Church in today's liturgy urges us not to grow lazy in the faith. The Church invites us to profess, celebrate, grow, and live the faith as we await a new heaven and a new earth in which righteousness dwells that John speaks about in the second reading.

John sees a new universe created by God for his elect. The Elect are those who by faith confess the beauty of following the Lord Jesus wherever they are called to bear witness to the fact that they are Christian: in the family, in public life, in the exercise of the charisms and ministries to which they are called. (cf. "Porta Fidei")

In the gospel reading Jesus glorifies the Father by showing who the Father really is to us. God is love. He, therefore, reminds us of the importance of love in our lives as his disciples. Let us remember that through faith, we can recognize the face of the risen Lord in those who ask for our love.

By faith let us continue to confess the beauty of following the Lord Jesus wherever we are called to bear witness to the fact we are Christians: in the family, in the workplace, in public life, in the exercise of the chrisms and the ministries to which we are called. And throughout our life let us allow the word of God to shape us by its transforming grace.