

May 26, 2019 | Easter 6

God Happens (While We Are Busy Making Plans)
Or..
Wandering Jews – All Over The Map

Ancient Reading ~ Acts 16:6-15

Next, they traveled through Phrygia and Galatian territory, because they had been prevented by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia. When they reached the frontier of Mysia, they thought to cross through it to Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them, so they went through Mysia and came down to Troas.

Then one night Paul had a vision: there stood a person from Macedonia pleading with him and saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." When Paul had seen the vision, we immediately tried to cross over to Macedonia, being convinced that God had called us to proclaim the Good News to them. We set sail from Troas and took a straight course to Samothrace, the following day to Neapolis, and from there to Philippi, which is one of the bigger cities in Macedonia and a Roman colony. We remained in this city for some days.

On the Sabbath day we went outside the gates along by the river, thinking we might find a place of prayer. We sat down and spoke to the women who had gathered there. A certain woman named Lydia, a worshiper of God, was there listening to us; she was from the city of Thyatira and a dealer in purple cloth. God opened her heart to listen eagerly to what was said by Paul. When she and her household were baptized, she urged us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to God, come and stay at my home." She prevailed upon us, and we accepted.

Second Reading ~ Pilgrim's Prayer by Thomas Merton

My Holy God, I have no idea where I am going. I do not see the road ahead of me. I cannot know for certain where it will end, nor do I really know myself, and the fact that I think I am following your will does not mean that I am actually doing so.

But I believe that the desire to please you does in fact please you, and I hope I have that desire in all that I do. I hope and pray that I will never do anything apart from that desire. And I know that if I do this, you will lead me by the right road, though I may know nothing about it.

Therefore I will always trust you, even though I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death. I will not fear, for you are ever with me, and you will never leave me to face my journey alone.

Third Reading ~ adapted from Father Richard Rohr in
Falling Upward: A Spirituality for the Two Halves of Life

Perhaps it has never struck you how consistently the great religious teachers and founders leave home, go on pilgrimage to far-off places, do a major turnaround, choose downward mobility; and how often it is that their established religion at that time, spiritual

authorities, and often even civil authorities, fight against them. Read the biographies of Hindu sadhus, Buddha, Ashoka, Abraham, Joseph, Moses, Jesus, Sufi saints, Francis, Clare, and the numerous hermits and pilgrims of Cappadocia, Mt. Athos, and Russia. You will see that this pattern is rather universal. Instead of our “Don’t leave home without it” mentality, the spiritual greats’ motto seems to be “Leave home to find it!” And of course, they were never primarily talking just about physical home, but about all the validations, securities, illusions, prejudices, smallness—and hurts too—that home, family, and even the religious tradition of their origin, always implies.