

## Reading for the Memorial of St Barnabas, Apostle

11<sup>th</sup> June 2024

**First reading Acts 11:21-26,13:1-3**

**He was a good man, filled with the Holy Spirit and with faith**

A great number believed and were converted to the Lord.

The church in Jerusalem heard about this and they sent Barnabas to Antioch. There he could see for himself that God had given grace, and this pleased him, and he urged them all to remain faithful to the Lord with heartfelt devotion; for he was a good man, filled with the Holy Spirit and with faith. And a large number of people were won over to the Lord.

Barnabas then left for Tarsus to look for Saul, and when he found him he brought him to Antioch. As things turned out they were to live together in that church a whole year, instructing a large number of people. It was at Antioch that the disciples were first called 'Christians.'

In the church at Antioch the following were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen, who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. One day while they were offering worship to the Lord and keeping a fast, the Holy Spirit said, 'I want Barnabas and Saul set apart for the work to which I have called them.' So it was that after fasting and prayer they laid their hands on them and sent them off.

**Responsorial Psalm Psalm 97(98):1-6**

*The Lord has shown his salvation to the nations.*

Sing a new song to the Lord  
for he has worked wonders.

His right hand and his holy arm  
have brought salvation.

The Lord has made known his salvation;  
has shown his justice to the nations.

He has remembered his truth and love  
for the house of Israel.

All the ends of the earth have seen  
the salvation of our God.

Shout to the Lord, all the earth,  
ring out your joy.

Sing psalms to the Lord with the harp  
with the sound of music.

With trumpets and the sound of the horn  
acclaim the King, the Lord.

**Gospel Acclamation**

**Mt28:19,20**

Alleluia, alleluia!

Go, make disciples of all the nations.

I am with you always; yes, to the end of time.

Alleluia

**You received without charge: give without charge**

Jesus said to his apostles, 'As you go, proclaim that the kingdom of heaven is close at hand. Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out devils. You received without charge, give without charge. Provide yourselves with no gold or silver, not even with a few coppers for your purses, with no haversack for the journey or spare tunic or footwear or a staff, for the workman deserves his keep.

'Whatever town or village you go into, ask for someone trustworthy and stay with him until you leave. As you enter his house, salute it, and if the house deserves it, let your peace descend upon it; if it does not, let your peace come back to you.'

**Short reflection on the reading for today**

The kindly Cypriot, Barnabas, was admired for his gift of animating others. His given name was Josef, but *Barnabas* was added as a nickname which means "son of encouragement." We see him engaged in that ministry in today's text from the Acts. Something powerful and new was stirring within the Christian community in Antioch. In that city the gospel had for the first time been preached to *pagans* as well as Jews and therefore a new kind of church was emerging there, a group that included members of Jewish and non-Jewish background.

When Barnabas was sent to Antioch by the apostles to assess what was happening there, he immediately recognised it as the work of the Lord and sided with this new development. He turned out to be absolutely right; it was indeed the work of the Lord. God is always at work in new and creative ways among us and it is a great gift to be able to recognise divine inspiration wherever it is to be found, and to celebrate and encourage its effects. Barnabas had this gift of noticing where the Lord was at work because, as the narrator says, he was *a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith (Acts 11:24)*. We need to be open to the Spirit, in order to recognise the work of the Spirit. As Saint Paul says in one of his letters, *spiritual things are discerned spiritually (1 Cor 2:14)*.