**Scripture and Feast Day Notes**

**Sunday,April 26, 2020**

**From Today’s Readings**

**John 2:23-3:12** Nicodemus, a Jewish leader and teacher, is impressed with the “signs and wonders” Jesus has performed and wants to know more. Jesus tells him of a second, even more life-changing birth when we are born again “of water and the Spirit.” *Discuss/reflect: On their mission to Samaria, Peter and John saw that people were baptized in Jesus’ name but the “Holy Spirit had not yet come upon them: (Acts 8:16). At baptism we are “born again” into God’s family, but how do we continue this ongoing spiritual birthing throughout our lives?*

**Acts 9:23-31** The newly converted St. Paul is preaching in the synagogues of Damascus. When his life is threatened, followers lower him over a wall in a basket. Barnabus later introduces and defends him to the apostles in Jerusalem who are understandably fearful since Paul was once a zealous persecutor of Christians. The church experiences peace and great growth. *Discuss/reflect:* The church is described as “living in the fear of God.” (v.31) The Greek word “phobos” denotes the reverential awe of those “struck by the holiness of God.” Perhaps this simply means that these early faithful were living reverent lives. Do *you* live in awe of God’s authority and holiness? What are some specific signs of this?

**1 Peter 2:1-10** The apostle Peter describes all believers as “living stones” who come to *the* Living Stone, Christ, to be built into the spiritual house that is the Church. *Discuss/reflect: Jesus as the cornerstone of our lives – a beautiful image! A cornerstone is defined as a foundational stone in a building, and figuratively, as basic and important. Is He the cornerstone of* your *life?*

 **Today is Sunday of the World Church (Green Sunday)**

 The second Sunday after Easter is dedicated to the very first church in the world – established in Jerusalem by Christ. It was there in the Upper Room (*Ver-na-doon*) that Jesus shared His Body and Blood in the bread and wine of the new Covenant with his disciples and where they in turn gathered with other followers before and after the Resurrection and at Pentecost. It was this nucleus of Christ’s church that would one day become a church of millions. Although the site remains a place of pilgrimage, the original building itself no longer exists. In its place, we have a *world* church—the entire earth which the Christian Church has taken under its roof. The name “green” conveys the idea of new life in Christ’s resurrection as well as its glorious evidence in nature at this time of year.

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