

May 13, 2020

I believe this is our last session together until we meet again in September. Thank you all for being part of our faith formation and religious education. I enjoyed our time together and our correspondences via e-mail.

So, a last lesson in which you will learn a little about Saul of Tarsus, also called Paul, the person we know as St. Paul, a disciple of Jesus who fearlessly preached the gospel. Saul was an educated Jewish man and a persecutor of the early followers of Jesus. He underwent a conversion when Jesus spoke to him in a vision as he was traveling to the city of Damascus to have Jesus' followers arrested and brought back to Jerusalem to stand trial.

Readings: Acts 8: 1 - 3 (Saul, the persecutor of the followers of Jesus)
Acts 9: 1 – 19 (Saul's encounter with Jesus on the road to Damascus)
Acts 13: 16 – 39 (Saul's preaching in the synagogue)

The reading from Acts (the 5th book of the New Testament) Chapter 9, verses 1 – 19 is about Saul's conversion. This is the same person we recognize as St. Paul who, in the first century A.D., preached the Good News about Jesus to many Gentile (non-Jewish) people over the course of several long journeys on land and sea. His travels took him to places we today call Syria, Turkey, Greece and Italy that border the Mediterranean Sea. To get an idea of Paul's preaching (and for a brief summary of some of what we learned this year) please read Acts Chapter 13, verses 16 – 39

After his missionary journeys preaching the gospel, Paul was taken as a prisoner to Rome where he eventually died as a martyr for the faith, probably during the reign of the Roman Emperor Nero around 68 A.D., some thirty plus years after the death of Jesus. Of course, we honor Paul as a great saint of the Church and he is forever known as a great evangelist and defender of the Christian faith.

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