

May 10, 2020-Fifth Sunday of Easter

‘When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome brought spices so that they might go and anoint him. Very early when the sun had risen, on the first day of the week, they came to the tomb.’ -Mark 16:1-2

Mother of James and John

Very little is known about the mothers of the apostles, except for Salome (the mother of two apostles) and Mary (the mother of James). Even then, much of the information comes from legends or apocryphal gospels.

Salome is described as the mother of the apostles, James and John, or, as the Evangelist Mark puts it, “the mother of Zebedee’s children.” Her family background is unknown, outside the fact that she is the wife of Zebedee, a wealthy fisherman living in Capernaum.

Salome is believed to have become a follower of Jesus, and supported her sons’ decision to become disciples of Jesus. St. Matthew also writes of her request to Jesus that her sons be seated beside him. St. Mark says she was present at the Crucifixion, and accompanied Mary Magdalene to Jesus’ tomb on Easter morning.

After Pentecost, legend says Salome settled in Veroli, in central Italy. She is sometimes called St. Mary Salome, whose feast is celebrated October 22. She is the patron saint of Veroli, whose Basilica of St. Mary Salome is said to contain her remains.

TODAY IS MOTHER’S DAY

Called to be a disciple

I don’t know much about Matthias but I wonder what kind of a person he was, and what he was thinking when he was selected to be one of the apostles.

He wasn’t chosen when Jesus picked the original Twelve. Then Jesus died, rose from the dead, and ascended into heaven, and Matthias found himself in the same situation that, actually, I am in today—serving a God who isn’t physically present.

Here Matthias is, by some strange circumstances, as the apostles try to choose somebody to replace Judas. And they are going to do it by chance. They are going to draw lots. And Matthias is chosen to be one of the Twelve.

Well, it may seem like Matthias’ selection was by chance, but it wasn’t. The apostles had prayed. They believed that God works in so many mysterious ways that sometimes it seems like chance. It’s like wondering how I became Catholic, when most of the world isn’t. There are about 7.5 billion people in the world, and only 15 percent are Catholic.

But my being Catholic wasn’t by chance any more than Matthias being chosen to be an apostle was by chance.

I was called by name by God to be a disciple in a way that seems mysterious and almost by chance. And the more I believe that I was handpicked by God and sent into this world, the more I feel called to sometimes stand against the world and be who I am called to be, God’s disciple.

‘A dead thing can go with the stream, but only a living thing can go against it.’

-G.K. Chesterton