

My
Meditations
on
Saint Paul

By
Rev. James E. Sullivan, M.S.

Acts of the Apostles • Epistles

1967

Msgr. Austin P. Bennett, JCD, P.A.
Director of the

CONFRATERNITY OF THE PRECIOUS BLOOD
5300 FORT HAMILTON PARKWAY
BROOKLYN, N.Y. 11219

0203

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Foreword

WE are pleased to present the latest addition to our spiritual library. Previously, we presented the Gospels in "Christ in the Gospel" and in "My Meditation on the Gospel." We proceed now to the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles of St. Paul.

THE message of the Acts is a particularly relevant one at this time when there is a renewed interest in the nature of the Church and the theology of the Apostolate. It is interesting to observe how well the author has woven the Epistles of St. Paul into this message.

SO many books have been published since Vatican II but, as has been observed, while they were written to inform the theologians they have not moved the People of God. This book is written for everyman in language he will readily understand. It is primarily a prayer book. It is not enough to read the Scriptures, we must meditate upon them.

Read. Reflect. Pray.

(Rt. Rev. Msgr.) Joseph B. Frey

PENTECOST—BIRTH OF
THE MYSTICAL BODY OF CHRIST

Acts 2 : 1-41

PRELUDES

1. *The joyful singing band of Christians.*
2. *The grace, Lord, of total commitment to You.*

POINTS

HAPPY groups of Jews from all nations were making their way to the Temple that bright Pentecost morning. They were in a holiday humor as they walked with their loved ones under the clear blue sky.—Suddenly a great roar resounded about them. It was louder than thunder. They looked up!—Strange! Not a trace of a storm. They talked about what it might be. Then from a distance they heard a large crowd of men and women singing. They drew nearer now. They chanted the psalms with almost reckless abandon. The groups who listened were astounded, for each national group heard the psalms in its own language!

The group of disciples stopped now as Peter stood up and motioned for silence. “Men of Judea,” he explained to the mystified crowd, “these men are not drunk, as you suppose.”

Their ecstasy of joy and the miracle of tongues were the fulfillment of prophecy. Jesus, Whom many of them had heard speak and work miracles, was really not dead but alive and glorified. And this day He poured forth His Spirit upon them as He had promised.

The crowds were deeply moved. "Brethren, what shall we do?" they asked. "Repent," Peter replied, "and be baptized, every one of you, in the Name of the Lord Jesus." The first converts had been made.

LORD, now was Your promise fulfilled that "You would not leave us orphans . . . that You would come to us again." Pentecost was like a new Christmas. In Bethlehem, You were born to us in Your Body and Soul Which would suffer for us and redeem us. This day of Pentecost, You were born again in a new Body, Your Mystical Body, the Church. The Church is *You*, Lord, *You* extended into place and time—reaching out in every century and every place "to seek and to save what is lost." On Pentecost the disciples and their successors became Your Lips, Your Hands—and Your Heart!

DEAR MASTER, how did I ever get the idea that I could live a smug comfort-

able life—without concern for saving souls! Who could be neutral? Being a Christian is a *personal* commitment. It means becoming a limb of a Body—a living, throbbing Mystical Body. Being part of the Church automatically means being part of You.

Dear Lord, let me care for souls—my own soul and others. No more of this nonsense that saving souls is only the work of Your priests! No more of this apathy which considers that my apostolic work is over once I've thrown a few dollars to the Missions!—Let me be vitally concerned to know You and to love You.—And then let me radiate Your goodness to my family and my neighbor and the world.

**PETER CURES THE LAME MAN—
DAILY MEDITATION**

Acts 3:1-26

PRELUDES

1. *The cured man jumping up and down with joy.*
2. *The grace, Lord, of faithful, daily meditation.*

POINTS

THE TEMPLE and its worship still meant a great deal to the Apostles. Each visit

seemed to bring back wonderful memories. This day was no exception. As they entered through the Beautiful Gate on the eastern side, they saw some people carrying a man who was lame from birth. As he looked at Peter and John with pleading eyes, thoughts rushed in upon them like a torrent. They could see again the paralytic by the pool of Bethesda—hear the Master's gentle voice. They must do as He had done. The words poured out: "Silver and gold I have none, but what I have, that I give thee. In the name of Jesus of Nazareth, arise and walk."

The effect was instantaneous. The lame man felt strength come back into his ankles and feet. He jumped to his feet. He couldn't stop. He ran and jumped up and down, shouting his praise and gratitude to God.

DEAR MASTER, this happy scene is just like a story taken from the Gospels. There's the same consciousness of another's need, the same sympathy and willingness to help. We might almost think that it was You who spoke the words of cure instead of Peter. And why, Lord?—*Because it really was You*—You in Your new Body, the Church! You were never to leave this sick, disturbed world

until "all things were restored in Christ." If the Apostles were to be Your Lips and preach, they were also to be Your Heart to love and Your Hands to heal.

LORD, the memory of You and what You did was what kept the Apostles conscious of their role in Your Mystical Body. They were so deeply imbued with Your Spirit, that they thought and felt and acted just like You.

I am a member of Your Mystical Body too, Lord. And yet too often my judgments are based on worldly standards, my actions motivated totally by natural likes and dislikes, by moods and whims. What I lack is this loving awareness of You—this Christ-centered thinking. Let me get back to daily meditation. Show me that I must prepare it well and pray it sincerely. Only thus can I become Christ-centered and reflect You in my life.

**PETER PREACHES TO THE CROWD—
PROVIDENCE**

Acts 3 : 1-26

PRELUDES

1. *Large group of men sitting in Solomon's Porch, listening intently to Peter.*
2. *The grace, Lord, to understand Your great plan in my life and to accept it with joy.*

POINTS

THE CURED man acted so ecstatically happy that a large crowd began to form out of curiosity. Peter saw it as an opportunity to tell them about Jesus. It was a sermon full of sorrow and full of hope. He reminded them that this wonderful miracle, all this exuberant joy, had been caused by One Whom they had put to death. Jesus not only gave life partially—as He had just given life to these dead limbs—He was really the Author of life itself. And yet here, in the very shadow of these walls “they had chosen a murderer” in His place.

A sad, guilty mood came over the crowd. The excitement about the miracle died down. Peter waited for the realization of it to grip them. Then he went on. His voice was warm with compassion—like the voice of the Saviour

on Calvary. “Now, brethren, I *know* you acted in ignorance, as did also your rulers.” Besides, “in this way, God fulfilled what He had announced beforehand by the prophets . . . that His Christ should suffer” and thus win salvation. That salvation was for them, if they would only renounce their sins and be converted.

2 **D**EAR MASTER, one of the most beautiful and consoling truths You taught was the Fatherly Providence of God. We needn't fear, You told us, because we were “worth more than many sparrows.” Now Peter showed how this loving Providence worked out in daily life. They set free Barabbas who had murdered, and put to death You Who gave life! It seemed like such a senseless waste!—And yet even this couldn't interfere with Your Father's love and care. He turned the evil itself into good. Your death became the means of life. What a tremendous love, my Lord! What consolation to know that He can turn to good use even our disloyalty and sin!

3 **D**EAR MASTER, when will I learn to trust in my Father's loving care! I recall it in times of joy and consolation. I say