

May 15, 2023



Center for Spiritual Development

Daily Reflections

JOURNEYING THROUGH EASTER

Photo by Tomas Williams from Pexels

THE LORD OPENED HER HEART

By Sister Christine Hilliard, CSJ

Today's Reading

We set sail from Troas, making a straight run for Samothrace, and on the next day to Neapolis, and from there to Philippi, a leading city in that district of Macedonia and a Roman colony. We spent some time in that city. On the sabbath we went outside the city gate along the river where we thought there would be a place of prayer. We sat and spoke with the women who had gathered there. One of them, a woman named Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth, from the city of Thyatira, a worshiper of God, listened, and the Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what Paul was saying. After she and her household had been baptized, she offered us an invitation, "If you consider me a believer in the Lord, come and stay at my home," and she prevailed on us.

ACTS 16:11-15

Reflection

Paul is traveling on the main highway from the Adriatic to Asia. He stops in Philippi, a major Roman colony in Macedonia (northern Greece), seeking a “place of prayer” on the Sabbath, which turns out to be an outdoor meeting area of worship for Jews who had no regular synagogue. One worshiper of the group is Lydia, a business woman who makes a living as a dealer in purple cloth, a luxury item in her society. She is wealthy enough to be the mistress of a self-sustaining household. But her status and possessions are not what she is remembered for. Rather she is known as being a worshiper of God whose heart was open to the Lord. After hearing Paul preach, she and her whole household were moved to be baptized. Then she practices the virtue of hospitality by opening her home to Paul and his companions. Later they are arrested and imprisoned for crimes against Rome. Then a dramatic release from prison occurs with Paul and his companions once again relying on Lydia’s hospitality before leaving Philippi. Nothing else is specifically said of her, however, Lydia may well have been the leader of the first house church of Philippi.



Flowers forming the shape of a heart on a book
Photo by Maria Maleta/ Pexels

For Pondering

- Have you known anyone like Lydia, whose faith is shown concretely through her life? How did this person impact the living out of your own faith?
 - If you could sit down and share a cup of coffee/tea with Lydia, what would you ask her? Hear her response.
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For Prayer

*We, the friend of Lydia, sing to you, O LORD, a new song of praise
in the assembly of the faithful.*

*We are glad that you are our Maker
we rejoice that you are our Teacher.*

*We praise your name in the festive dance,
We sing praise to you with timbrel and harp,
For you love us, your people, with an everlasting love*

*We exult in your presence and sing for joy ..
This is the wonder of all God's faithful. Amen. Alleluia.*

ADAPTED RESPONSORIAL PSALM 149:1b-2, 3-4, 5-6a, AND 9b

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