

From the Pastor's Office

4th Sunday of Easter

When the Jewish authorities arrested Peter and the other Apostles, they were concerned that people would turn against them for killing an innocent man, Jesus of Nazareth. Their great priority was to preserve the peace and hold onto their power. That is a thing about people who like to hold power. They don't want to give it up ever. The good Jew does what he is told to do. When in doubt, the good Jew goes to the Rabbi who advises them on what is the best course of action to take. No doubt, after the events of Jerusalem, the Jewish authority made sure to tell the Jewish world that the Christians were troublemakers. Let no one accommodate them. Things became so heated that whenever people learned that Christian missionaries were in town, riots ensued. There are plenty of stories about Paul and his people getting stoned and forced to leave town. Today, in the first lesson, we get an account of trouble happening in Antioch of Pisidia. In a remote place like Antioch, it is understandable that so many people came out to hear the disciples preach about Jesus. There was nothing happening out of the ordinary. Nothing ever happens. Then people were told that these troublemaking Christians were preaching, and they wanted to hear what all the fuss was about. Straight away, the Jewish authority sprung into action to try and drive these people away. Desperate situations call for desperate solutions. The Jewish authority incited the prominent people to organize and drive these Christians out. We are inclined to forget how powerful the Christian message is today. We are so used to hearing it that maybe we don't hear the message anymore. The Christian imperative is to love our neighbor as ourselves. What would happen in our society if we carried out that ordinance today? Today, we are fighting among ourselves about people and their rights. We are deporting people, good and bad. We are withholding public aid to people who need it. We are cutting off people's entitlements. Do the Christians have anything to say about it? I am of the opinion that maybe people prefer to hide in the crowd. In the hidden part of the crowd, they will express their opinions openly, but none will come forward and actively fight for justice. Why on earth should I care when I can pass the buck? "Something should be done about it." That's about all I can muster. Pity...



With love,
Fr. Pat