

**We are Set Apart for God – Wednesday in 4<sup>th</sup> Week of Easter May 6<sup>th</sup> 2020  
(Acts 12:24-13:5, John 12:44-50)**

Christianity received its official name in Antioch but before that, Christians were called the people of the Way. In today's first reading, soon after receiving their official name as Christians, the Antioch Christians gathered for prayer and they received a prophecy that they should send Barnabas and Saul on a special mission. The Holy Spirit said to them, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." This reminds me of the life of some great prophets, like Jeremiah who was set apart from his mother's womb. (Jeremiah 1:5). The Suffering Servant of Isaiah also said he was set apart from birth to be a light to the nations. (Isaiah 49:6). Similarly, Jesus says in today's gospel that he is sent into the world as light to lead us from darkness to the way of the Father.

What does it mean when the Holy Spirit directed the Antioch Christians to "set apart Barnabas and Saul for his special mission?" It means they are made holy and they will now think differently, act differently, and live their lives differently in the proclamation of God's Word in the Roman Empire. But to be set apart for God, we need to first set apart time with God. That is what the Church in Antioch did. They set apart time for God by praying and fasting seeking special guidance from God, and that was when the Holy Spirit inspired them with prophecy.

Dear Friends in Christ, there are so many things contending for our time and attention that we sometimes realise we have not really spent time with God for a while. Let us slow down and stop for a moment and set apart time with God. If we are to be made holy or set apart for God, we need to set apart time with God.

May Almighty God make us holy and set us apart for his special mission in the midst of this pandemic. **Amen.**

**Fr. Emmanuel Subaar**