**Lesson 20 Feb. 11 – Acts 19:1–20, 23–40 Ephesus, Exorcists, and a Silversmiths Riot**

In our last lesson Paul was in Corinth. He met with some fellow tent makers and stayed with them for a while practicing his trade. Every Sabbath, he went to the synagogue to try to convince the Jews that Jesus was the Messiah. He was later joined by Silas and Timothy. Paul then was able to commit all of his time to preaching and teaching. Just when Paul was losing patience with the non-believing Jews, Crispus, a synagogue official comes to believe in Jesus as the Messiah. Then God reassures and comforts Paul with words of comfort in a vision. Unfortunately, the non-believing Jews try to bring charges against Paul, asking that he be arrested. The Proconsul Gallio decides not to prosecute Paul because the charges made against him were of religious doctrine in nature and not a matter of civil law. Paul stayed in Corinth for a year and a half. He then set sail to Syria, together with Priscilla and Aquila. From there he traveled to Ephesus and Phrygia. In Ephesus they met Apollos, a believer who was an eloquent speaker.

1. **When did you feel closest to God this week? Was there a particular verse or message in this week’s lesson from Acts 19 that you found inspiring?**
2. **In the Church today, a person may only be baptized once, regardless of where they were baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Read verses Acts 19:1-7 and Catechism reference 1288. Why was it necessary for the Ephesians to be baptized again?**

**Acts 19:1-7 1**While Apollos was in Corinth, Paul traveled through the interior of the country and came [down] to Ephesus where he found some disciples. **2**He said to them, “Did you receive the holy Spirit when you became believers?” They answered him, “We have never even heard that there is a holy Spirit.” **3**He said, “How were you baptized?” They replied, “With the baptism of John.” **4**Paul then said, “John baptized with a baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, in Jesus.” **5**When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. **6**And when Paul laid [his] hands on them, the holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied. **7**Altogether there were about twelve men.

**CCC 1288**"From that time on the apostles, in fulfillment of Christ's will, imparted to the newly baptized by the laying on of hands the gift of the Spirit that completes the grace of Baptism. For this reason, in the *Letter to the Hebrews* the doctrine concerning Baptism and the laying on of hands is listed among the first elements of Christian instruction. The imposition of hands is rightly recognized by the Catholic tradition as the origin of the sacrament of Confirmation, which in a certain way perpetuates the grace of Pentecost in the Church."

1. **Paul has often been discouraged by those Jews who did not believe the Christian message. In Ephesus, how did Paul react to the disbelief of those in the synagogue? How can we deduce that his reaction was, in part, the Holy Spirit guiding him? See Acts 19:8-12.**

**Acts 19:8-12 8**He entered the synagogue, and for three months debated boldly with persuasive arguments about the kingdom of God. **9**But when some in their obstinacy and disbelief disparaged the Way before the assembly, he withdrew and took his disciples with him and began to hold daily discussions in the lecture hall of Tyrannus. **10**This continued for two years with the result that all the inhabitants of the province of Asia heard the word of the Lord, Jews and Greeks alike. **11**So extraordinary were the mighty deeds God accomplished at the hands of Paul **12**that when face cloths or aprons that touched his skin were applied to the sick, their diseases left them and the evil spirits came out of them.

1. **Read Acts 5:15-16, Acts 19:11-12 above, and Mark 5:25-43. What do each of these verses say about true faith? Do you think they support the use of, or reverence for holy relics?**

**Acts 5:15-1615**Thus they even carried the sick out into the streets and laid them on cots and mats so that when Peter came by, at least his shadow might fall on one or another of them. **16**A large number of people from the towns in the vicinity of Jerusalem also gathered, bringing the sick and those disturbed by unclean spirits, and they were all cured.

**Mark 5:25-43 25**There was a woman afflicted with hemorrhages for twelve years. **26**She had suffered greatly at the hands of many doctors and had spent all that she had. Yet she was not helped but only grew worse. **27**She had heard about Jesus and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak. **28**She said, “If I but touch his clothes, I shall be cured.” **29**Immediately her flow of blood dried up. She felt in her body that she was healed of her affliction. **30**Jesus, aware at once that power had gone out from him, turned around in the crowd and asked, “Who has touched my clothes?” **31**But his disciples said to him, “You see how the crowd is pressing upon you, and yet you ask, ‘Who touched me?’” **32**And he looked around to see who had done it. **33**The woman, realizing what had happened to her, approached in fear and trembling. She fell down before Jesus and told him the whole truth. **34**He said to her, “Daughter, your faith has saved you. Go in peace and be cured of your affliction.”

1. **Read Acts 19:13-20 and Matthew 17:15-20. Why was the Jewish high priest unable to exorcize the evil spirit?**

**Acts 19:13-20 13**Then some itinerant Jewish exorcists tried to invoke the name of the Lord Jesus over those with evil spirits, saying, “I adjure you by the Jesus whom Paul preaches.” **14**When the seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish high priest, tried to do this, **15**the evil spirit said to them in reply**, “Jesus I recognize, Paul I know, but who are you?” 16**The person with the evil spirit then sprang at them and subdued them all. He so overpowered them that they fled naked and wounded from that house. **17**When this became known to all the Jews and Greeks who lived in Ephesus, fear fell upon them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was held in great esteem. **18**Many of those who had become believers came forward and openly acknowledged their former practices. **19**Moreover, a large number of those who had practiced magic collected their books and burned them in public. They calculated their value and found it to be fifty thousand silver pieces. **20**Thus did the word of the Lord continue to spread with influence and power.

**Matthew 17:15-20** “Lord, have pity on my son, for he is a lunatic[[n](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+17&version=NABRE#fen-NABRE-28035n)] and suffers severely; often he falls into fire, and often into water. **16**I brought him to your disciples, but they could not cure him.” **17**Jesus said in reply, “O faithless and perverse[[o](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+17&version=NABRE#fen-NABRE-28037o)] generation, how long will I be with you? How long will I endure you? Bring him here to me.” **18**Jesus rebuked him and the demon came out of him,[[p](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+17&version=NABRE#fen-NABRE-28038p)] and from that hour the boy was cured. **19**Then the disciples approached Jesus in private and said, “Why could we not drive it out?” **20**[[q](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+17&version=NABRE#fen-NABRE-28040q)]He said to them, “Because of your little faith. Amen, I say to you, if you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you.”

1. **Reflection. Was does *Acts 19:15 above*, say about the nature and knowledge of evil spirits? See also Acts 16:16-18 and Catechism reference 434. How should we respond to this information?**

**Acts 16:16-18** we met a slave girl with an oracular spirit**,** who used to bring a large profit to her owners through her fortune-telling. **17**She began to follow Paul and us, shouting, “These people are slaves of the Most High God, who proclaim to you a way of salvation.” **18**She did this for many days. Paul became annoyed, turned, and *said to the spirit*, “I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her.” Then it came out at that moment.

**CCC 434 J**esus' Resurrection glorifies the name of the Savior God, for from that time on it is the name of Jesus that fully manifests the supreme power of the "name which is above every name". The evil spirits fear his name; in his name his disciples perform miracles, for the Father grants all they ask in this name.

1. **Check your footnotes for information on the Goddess Artemis. Read Acts 19:23-27.**

**Acts 19:23-2723**About that time a serious disturbance broke out concerning the Way. **24**There was a silversmith named Demetrius who made miniature silver shrines of Artemis and provided no little work for the craftsmen. **25**He called a meeting of these and other workers in related crafts and said, “Men, you know well that our prosperity derives from this work. **26**As you can now see and hear, not only in Ephesus but throughout most of the province of Asia this Paul has persuaded and misled a great number of people by saying that gods made by hands are not gods at all. **27**The danger grows, not only that our business will be discredited, but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis will be of no account, and that she whom the whole province of Asia and all the world worship will be stripped of her magnificence.

1. **What are the silversmiths afraid of? Do we see some anti-Semitic bias rearing its ugly head in this scene as well? Read Acts 19:28-34.**

**Acts 19:28-34 28**When they heard this, they were filled with fury and began to shout, “Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!” **29**The city was filled with confusion, and the people rushed with one accord into the theater, seizing Gaius and Aristarchus, the Macedonians, Paul’s traveling companions. **30**Paul wanted to go before the crowd, but the disciples would not let him, **31**and even some of the Asiarchs who were friends of his sent word to him advising him not to venture into the theater. **32**Meanwhile, some were shouting one thing, others something else; the assembly was in chaos, and most of the people had no idea why they had come together. **33**Some of the crowd prompted Alexander, as the Jews pushed him forward, and Alexander signaled with his hand that he wished to explain something to the gathering. **34**But when they recognized that he was a Jew, they all shouted in unison, for about two hours, “Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!”

1. **How is the town clerk a hero and voice of reason in Acts 19:35-40?**

**Acts 19:35-4035**Finally the town clerk restrained the crowd and said, “You Ephesians, what person is there who does not know that the city of the Ephesians is the guardian of the temple[[d](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+19&version=NABRE#fen-NABRE-31941d)] of the great Artemis and of her image that fell from the sky? **36**Since these things are undeniable, you must calm yourselves and not do anything rash. **37**The men you brought here are not temple robbers, nor have they insulted our goddess. **38**If Demetrius and his fellow craftsmen have a complaint against anyone, courts are in session, and there are proconsuls. Let them bring charges against one another. **39**If you have anything further to investigate, let the matter be settled in the lawful assembly, **40**for, as it is, we are in danger of being charged with rioting because of today’s conduct. There is no cause for it. We shall [not]be able to give a reason for this demonstration.” With these words he dismissed the assembly

 **Statue of the Goddess Artemis of Ephesus**