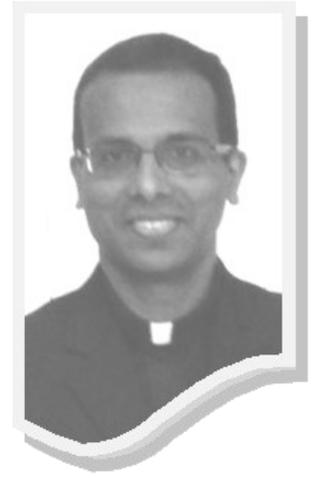




From the Pastor



Rome to Home: St. Paul—Part III

On the third day of our pilgrimage to Cyprus, we visited a number of ancient ruins and archeological sites and churches with beautiful Christian icons and mosaics dating back to the 6th Century. We ended the day visiting the Church of St. Lazarus. St. Lazarus settled in Cyprus after Jesus had raised him from the dead. He became the Bishop of Kition, and his sepulcher lies under the magnificent basilica built in the 9th Century—a fine example of Byzantine architecture in Cyprus. (It is said that Lazarus never laughed because he was not happy that Jesus brought him back to life.)

At the end of the third day, we moved to Limassol and checked into our hotel. The next day we headed to Curium—an important city kingdom destroyed by an earthquake in the 4th Century AD. There are ruins of a once amazing church with beautiful architecture that only your imagination can put together. There was even an ancient baptismal font.

The day ended with a visit to the castle of Kolossi. This castle served as the headquarters of the Knights of St. John after the fall of Acre in 1291. Our last day on the island began with a visit to the tomb of the kings—an ancient necropolis carved out of solid rock and given this name due to its imposing character.

Then we left for Paphos—our final place to visit. On our way, we stopped to take a few

photos of the Sea Rock that marks the legendary birth place of Aphrodite, the goddess of love and beauty. Paphos is a picturesque fishing harbor and was once an ancient Roman administrative capital of the island. A short walk from the harbor is the church of St. Paul where we celebrated the Holy Mass. A few yards from the church is the Pillar of St. Paul where legend dictates that the Saint was tied and flogged prior to converting the Roman Proconsul to Christianity. It was from Paphos that St. Paul and St. Mark set sail to Attalia in Turkey, continuing their missionary journey, while Barnabas stayed back on the island.

By recounting the evangelization of Cyprus, Luke in Acts 13:1-12 summarily narrates the initial episode of Saul and Barnabas's first missionary journey. After having traversed this rather large and mountainous island on foot from east to west, the apostles set sail again—this time for Asia Minor proper. The missionary from Tarsus, the protagonist of the second part of Acts, became the nascent Church's star evangelist and its principal model of apostolic zeal and indefatigable courage. It is in fact through Saul/Paul that the Good News of Jesus Christ, crucified and risen, was brought to "the end of the earth" (1:8); i.e., Rome. It is now your turn and mine to preserve and promote this faith with every fiber of our being.

—Fr. Jose Thomas