

You may remember about a month ago we heard about Saul's conversion where he became known as Paul. He wanted to find anyone who was a Christian and drag them out of their homes and put them in prison.

On his way to Damascus, a light suddenly came from the sky, he fell on the ground, and a voice said, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting him?" When Saul asked who was speaking to him, the voice said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting." Jesus then revealed that Saul was going to suffer for His name.

In these past few weeks, we have seen how Paul has really suffered for Jesus. In just about every city, he has met resistance – sometimes from his own Jewish brothers, and sometimes from the Gentiles. On one occasion, he was stoned and dragged out of the city. In Philippi, he was beaten with rods and thrown in prison. In Athens, he was mocked for speaking about the Resurrection of the dead.

Without question, Paul may have been tempted to give up. The task of bringing Jesus to everyone is too hard. He may have even been tempted to think that Jesus had abandoned him. However, we can imagine how beautiful it was for Paul to hear those words from Jesus. *"Do not be afraid. Go on speaking, and do not be silent, for I am with you."*

In this light, I think of the many ways we need to be comforted by Christ. We do anything if we know that Jesus is with us. Obviously, we can be comforted in prayer.

Additionally, Jesus can come to meet us through the Mass. We participate in Mass to hear Christ and receive Him in the Eucharist. Christ always speaks through His Church. We meet Jesus in service. St. Mother Teresa often saw Jesus in "distressing disguise" in the poor.

We can also hear him through family and friends. There is nothing like a good friendship where a friend is like Christ to us.

Regardless, as with Paul, may we always realize that Christ speaks to us to comfort us in our struggles and to share in our joys.