



A weekly reflection by members
of the Precious Blood Community

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“It is more blessed to give than to receive.”
(Acts 20:35)



We have reached Saint Paul's farewell to the Ephesian elders in this week's reading from Acts 20:28-38. Paul had spent three years in Ephesus and was now preparing for what he knew would be certain imprisonment and even possible death in Jerusalem. He warned the elders that savage wolves would be among them (Acts 20:29) and that there would even be those among the Christian community distorting the truth (Acts 20:30). Yet, Paul leaves the Ephesians with a radical model of selfless discipleship, in which he reminded the elders that his ministry coveted no one's silver or gold or clothing (Acts 20:33), instead that the center of Christ's ministry is to support our fellow companions and the weak (Acts 20:34-35).

Saint Paul was preparing the Christian community to recognize their responsibility in taking up the mantle of servant discipleship, while being clear-eyed of the cost. What a profound message for our current times! Jesuit theologian Jon Sobrino writes, "The prophet is a person on the street, the person who judges history from the viewpoint of God." Today, we see the truth distorted by fear and the perpetuation of conflict—often by our own Christian brothers and sisters. There can be a legitimate cost of standing against the "wolves" that threaten the most vulnerable: the poor, the incarcerated, and the

undocumented peoples, among many others. Following Saint Paul means realizing this path may cost us our comfort, our security, and the comfort our silence. Will we, like Saint Paul, journey toward our own "Jerusalem" despite the certain costs? I believe we can. By embracing a ministry of servant discipleship and finding the blessing in sacrificial giving, we ensure that all of God's creation will indeed be blessed.

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