

MAY 12, 2026 FATHER VIJAI AMIRTHARAJ

This story is told of a king who did not believe in God, or did not believe in the goodness of God, and he had a slave who always said, my King, God is good. God is always good. One day they went hunting, and along the way a wild animal attacked the king. The slave managed to save the king, but the king lost one of his fingers.

Furious and without showing any gratitude for being saved, the nobleman said, If God was so good, I would not have been attacked and lose my finger. The slave replied, my king, despite all these things, I can only tell you that God is good and God knows why all these things are happening. Outraged by this response, the king through the slave into prison.

Shortly after, the king left for another hunt and was captured by savages who made human sacrifices and in the altar, ready to sacrifice the king. The savages found that the king did not have one of his fingers, which was not acceptable to their guards, so he was released. Upon his return to the palace. The king authorized the release of his slave from prison, and received him very affectionately and said, my dear slave, God was really good to me.

I was almost killed by this wild man. But because of that one single finger which I did not have, they let me go. But then I have a question for you. The king said, If God is so good. Why did he allow me to put you in prison? And the slave replied, my dear King, if I had gone with you in this hunt, I would have been sacrificed instead of you, because I have no missing finger.

Therefore, remember, God is always good. Now, sisters and brothers, today's first reading is a beautiful example of how God can work something good out of what might seem tragic or unacceptable in human eyes. Now, Paul and Silas had no idea what God was up to. They were

pretty sure, though, that God did not want them to languish in prison for the rest of their lives, but they did not know whether to pray for a miraculous release or for the dismissal of the charges against them, or for illegal victory.

But they knew this God was in charge and could use every circumstance to bring glory to his name. So they began praising God, allowed singing songs of joy and victory. And God, as we heard, acted dramatically to open the prison doors and then eventually to open the heart of the jailer and to bring him and his entire household to conversion.

Now, sisters and brothers, adversaries and challenges of life will confront every one of us, saints and sinners alike. How do we deal with them? How do we face them? These are the questions that are poured before us as we come together to celebrate this Eucharist. Now, the most common human response is to be filled with fear, or to become anxious, or to make a rash decision, or to get upset with other people around us, or even with God.

But what is the Christian response? What is our response? As a person of faith? Consider the example set by Paul and Silas in prison, and remember that our behavior may also affect other people around us. What another sees in us in times of trouble can have a very deep impact. They may see how we handle a situation and use us as their example to follow.

A while ago I came across this card from one Joseph Campbell, the cave you fear to enter holds the treasure you seek. Now, Paul and Silas did not plan to go to prison, and when it happened, probably they were fearful. Like the apostles in today's gospel who were fearful when Jesus spoke to them about his departure from them.

Yet they were willing to surrender to God and continue to praise and give him thanks, even in shackles. They were willing to enter the cave of

suffering, and there they found the treasure of the faith in the jailer and his family. People like Paul and Silas continue to inspire us in our worn call to witness, both in good and challenging times. Today we pray for their intercession.