

# TRINITY NEWS

## Epiphany VI The Lord Bless You and Keep You

*The Aaronic Blessing* (Numbers 6:24–26, NIV)

The Lord bless you  
and keep you;  
the Lord make His face shine upon you  
and be gracious to you;  
the Lord turn His face toward you  
and give you peace.

The priestly blessing at Numbers 6:24-26 cherished by the Jews has been treasured also in the Christian Church. The Jewish blessings are the source of our own use of priestly blessings in the Church. But the ultimate source of our blessings, such as the end of the Eucharist is the saving work of Christ at the Cross. We use the sign of the cross in giving a priestly blessing to indicate its source in the Cross and Resurrection of Christ. The Jewish high priest gave a blessing by raising his hands as far as he could above his shoulders. It was said that the light of the Shekinah glory of God then rested and glistened on the tips of his fingers. After the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem the high priest would only raise his hands as high as his shoulders, because the glory had departed with the decimation of the Temple. The glow no longer appeared on the fingertips of the high priest.

### **The Lord bless you and keep you:**

Blessing goes with being protected and kept safe on the journey.

**The Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you:**

Blessing goes with the glory of God reflected in human conduct. It is exemplified in the conduct of Christ during his life, particularly in his Cross and Resurrection. Jews used the word “Yekara” to speak of the glory of God reflected in human conduct.

### **The Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace:**

This implies the movement of God towards us in the transparent glory of Christ on the Mount of Transfiguration and in his Resurrection.

It implies a sharing of the glory of God. With a touch of this glory comes assurance and hope and the filtering of beautiful human conduct reflected in the glory-face of God. It brings Shalom. This is a peace the darkness cannot erode, that hurts cannot entirely remove, that lost hopes, dreams and lost loves cannot totally extinguish.

It is a rejoicing, usually in brief and transitory moments. But those Shalom moments make the whole of life worth living. They are our ever – bubbling springs of resource on the journey. They bubble up to help repair our crushed hopes and restore moments that seem to have been lost forever.

The blessing is a beautiful one, and it is refreshing to treasure its words again and turn them over before our eyes to remind us that we do not walk alone. We are not without guidance and we're not without grace and we're not without Shalom. We Christians do not have the answer for everything, and neither does anyone else. But we do have hope in the never-ending dream that God will come to us and bless us and protect us and be gracious to us and give us his Shalom. God is Shalom. A violent god is a depraved god and those who worship such gods become like them: riddled with violence and its fears and manipulation.

Christianity has a loving figure at its centre. When it is true to him it bears the signs of love. Those who do the most good in the Church are those who show Yekara glory. Even a little of it reveals the true character of the Church. When spiritual principles depart from the Church, so does the glory of God: and what is left?

May the Lord bless you and keep you; may the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; may the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace. Amen.

**Bishop Arthur Jones**

### **NEXT WEEK'S READINGS:**

Leviticus 19:1-2,9-18; Psalm 71; 1 Corinthians 3:10-11,16-23;  
Matthew 5:38-48

### **THIS WEEK:**

**Feb. 15, Tuesday.**

- **Bible Study, 10am**
- **Bible Study, 7:15pm, (#3 Sta. Potenciana, Urdaneta Village, Makati**

**Feb. 17, Thursday.**

- **Midweek Eucharist, 10am, Chapel**