

TRINITY NEWS

Easter V Adding Lasting Pictures to our Living Portraits Gallery

Acts 8:26-40 is a descriptive narrative reminiscent of some scenes in Luke's other volume, The Gospel of Luke. It is a passage laden with messages. We don't see pictures of angels with wings floating around, in this text or in our sight by day or night. But when the Divine Presence appears, angels, "messengers," communicate the Presence and the message that accompanies the Spiral of Being that has drawn near. Occasionally, visibility occurs, and the Luminous Glory of God unveils its sheen and cascades over everything. The "Angel of the Lord", has not appeared in full glory on earth since the first century, but the emissaries have come.

An Ethiopian and Philip are the players. Philip comes alone, but the Ethiopian's colourful robes and retinue stamp his authority on the scene. This castrated black man and a Jew with a Greek name meet up at the prompting of the Spirit, "and the creed and the colour and the name won't matter". The Ethiopian and Philip are more than strangers. They are crossing an impassible cultural divide, exemplified by appearance, skin colour and language. Luke does not tell us about the Ethiopian's specific relationship to Judaism, only that he had worshipped in Jerusalem.

The Eunuch may well have been a "God fearer" from Ethiopia. That is, someone who stood in awe of the God of Israel. He was a mutilated man and therefore he would have difficulty in being accepted as a full member of Israel. He was very interested in the Scriptures without having a deep knowledge of them. When Philip catches up with him on the road to Gaza he hears him reading from the book of Isaiah in chapter 53 as we call it. Philip shows no hesitation in assisting the man who had asked for help in reading the passage. Philip immediately fastens onto the text and begins to expound it in a Christian way.

This is doing theology on the run. It also shows us how Christians began to take the scriptures from the Tanach and apply them directly to Christ. He had done this himself. He carried the vision of the Suffering Servant in Isaiah in his mind and heart to Calvary. The Ethiopian takes it in and as he goes along with Philip in the chariot he sees some water and asks to be baptized. Philip welcomes the Ethiopian into the Christian faith immediately after he asks for it via Baptism. Barriers are falling down, skin colour merges for a moment, and religious definitions are broadened by the Holy Spirit.

When we are threatened by something new, we revert in haste to our accumulated prejudices. Thinking ceases and biases take over. Creativity is stilled. Perhaps we should get up in the morning saying to ourselves that we are creative people, and that we will make a difference today. **We all want to be remembered, and the best way to be remembered is to remember others.** Where will the Spirit take us tomorrow? Watch out for ‘angelic’ presences, because they have messages that can be very disturbing to our status quo. They threaten our accumulated safety net that hinders us from lucid thinking that is creative, supportive, and life enhancing. Look into this incident in Scripture, as with other incidents, and see your own face in the scene and hear your own words and visualize your own actions in your response. Now that could be a revelation! It would also be a very perceptive and stimulating use of Scripture.

Bishop Arthur Jones

NEXT WEEK’S READINGS:

Acts 11:19-30; Psalm 33; 1 John 4:7-21; John 15:9-17

THIS WEEK:

May 8, Tuesday.

- Bible Study, 10am
- Group Discussion, 7:30pm @ the Tutton’s (#3 Sta. Potenciana, Urdaneta Village, Makati

TO PLAN:

May 19, Saturday. Dinner Dance. ECW fundraising.

May 21, Monday. Vestry Meeting.

May 27, Pentecost Sunday. Confirmation.

June 3, Trinity Sunday. *(Pls. see announcement below)*

A Pot Luck will be held on **Trinity Sunday, 3 June 2012 following the combined service at 9:00 a.m.** Activities for that Sunday will include our children, the youth, and adults. The event will enable parishioners to know each other better. **All are welcome to attend.**



Please indicate your attendance by filling in the sign-up sheet on the Notice Board outside the main office to ensure there are sufficient seats, cutlery and array of food etc., PLUS fun activities to cater for the various age groups. Thank You!