

Trinity News

Epiphany III Homecomings and Fresh Discoveries

Going back to our home town is like having a new hair style. We hope that it will look different, but also retain something of what we looked like before!

The text from Luke today speaks of Jesus coming to his hometown of Nazareth. He comes to the synagogue and speaks there.

Jesus reads the resonant words of Isaiah the prophet speaking of the Spirit of God anointing the servant of the Lord. He is to proclaim a message that would reach out to the poor and those who suffered deprivation or imprisonment. Indeed, anything that might take away from their freedom and sense of dignity, especially blindness. It is a luminous message of hope for the people of Israel and the world.

Jesus tells them after reading the words that they are about him and this stuns the gathering in the synagogue. These people sharply question the capacity of this young man from their own town to be able to do any of these things. They reject his divine power and instead point to the limitations of his human situation.

I was recently the last speaker and proposer of the toast at my aunt's 90th birthday party in my hometown. I told her that I had spoken in the great cathedrals of the world, and yet I was much more nervous about speaking in front of her. I recalled most of all her care of me when I was a very young man, wet behind the ears with little knowledge of life.

I had not seen some of my cousins since we were children. One came up and told me that she had always had a "soft spot" for me. She is the most beautiful of my cousins and I wondered why she hadn't said something when we were younger! Others showed in their faces and bodies the effects of their lifestyles. But it was a beautiful time of remembering and sharing.

My beloved eldest sister came to see me in Royal Prince Alfred Hospital in Sydney. I had come to Sydney for a day to see her beforehand. I was no longer the little boy that she knew, called "Sonny." She met Father Carlos Mendez when she came to see me. He came to visit with his sister and he was so enthusiastic about what I had shared with the people in the Philippines that my sister was highly impressed. Finally, she had seen her brother as he really is in the world. It is so wonderful in a family when that happens. We have so much to share now!

I wonder what Jesus really felt about the reception given to him in Nazareth? I wonder if people really understand the impact of what they say about specific individuals? We all make general comments that vaguely dissolve into thin air. But specific comments that target other people and seek to drag them down are just like the dumping of garbage. The garbage truck comes once a week, but the human garbage truck comes every day. Always wave other people's garbage trucks by, and refuse to dump garbage on other people. Realistic assessments of others are always in order, with the proviso that we usually don't know the whole story. When you are down because someone is trying to belittle you, sit with Jesus at Nazareth and listen to the crowd. Then see him get up and never look back.

Bishop Arthur Jones

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS:

Jeremiah 1:4-10; Psalm 71; 1 Corinthians 14:12b-20; Luke 4:21-32

THIS WEEK:

- Wednesday. Bible Study, 10am
- Thursday. Midweek Eucharist, 10:00am
- Saturday. Seminar on "*Befriending Tension in our Journey*" (8:30-12:00), to be held in the church.

TO PLAN:

February 12-Pancake Supper.

Tickets are already available in the parish office. For those who wish to donate, a sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board.



February 13-Ash Wednesday.

Eucharist at 10:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.