

TRINITY NEWS

Pentecost 18 The Secret of Being Content

“For I have learned to be content with what I have” (Philippians 4:11). This is set in a passage that Paul uses to affirm his life. He then says that “In any and all circumstances I have learned the secret of being well-fed and of going hungry, of having plenty and of being in need”. The word for “learned the secret” also means “to be initiated”, “to learn a lesson”. The secret of being content turns out to be the fruits of what we have learned in our experiences. Paul also says that he can do all things through Christ who strengthens him (4:13).

Paul is writing here to minister to himself as well as to others. He thanks the Christians at Philippi for being kind to him in his distress (4:14).

What we have learned

The kindness of others

The strength we are given by Christ.

People are seen as great when they appear in the halls of memory. They are not “great” in their present circumstances. **It is what they make of their circumstances that make them great. What is outstanding usually only appears as distinctive in hindsight.** Try going to your hometown when you have ‘succeeded’ in life. This is what happened to Jesus when he visited his hometown of Nazareth after he had become known as a healer of distinction. He was rejected at Nazareth by some of his peers and elders.

Paul’s affirmations and ours if we choose them.

1. **Being content is an attitude, not a fact.** I heard a woman in a hospital bed say sharply to attentive family visitors, “Why didn’t you come yesterday?” A woman in the next bed said to her visitors, “I haven’t seen you for a for a while, isn’t it wonderful that you have come!” We may not be able to change our circumstances but we can change our attitude in a microsecond.
2. **Demonstrating *utang na loob*, “gratitude”, for kindness rendered is a significant marker of our vision of life.** We should never forget those who have shown genuine kindness to us. It would be better not to recall those who have shown unkindness.

3. Sincere thought-driven words from the heart draw the LISTENER instantly. Paul is guided by the “Spirit of Jesus” (Act 16: 7). It is the Spirit of Jesus, the loving teacher from Galilee, who strengthens Paul every day. It is fundamental to Christianity that we do not walk alone in life and in death. We may desert Christ in our hour of need and turn blindly into unsafe paths, but he never deserts us. Being content, having gratitude and entrusting ourselves to Christ is the Pauline ‘formula’.

It also prevails!

Bishop Arthur Jones

THIS WEEK:

Wednesday, October 15.

- *Bible study, 10:00am*
- *Group discussion, 7:30pm, Parish office*

Thursday, October 16.

- *Midweek Eucharist, 10:00am, Chapel*

NEXT WEEK: *Visit of the sponsored school children from Antipolo, Cainta & Taguig, 9:30am.*

NEXT SUNDAY'S READINGS:

Isaiah 45:1-7; Psalm 96; 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10; Matthew 22:15-22

UPCOMING EVENTS:

November 9, Remembrance Sunday, 9:30am

November 16, NCCP Sunday, 9:30am

November 23, Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service & Dinner, 7:30pm
