

TRINITY NEWS

Pentecost V I'll Walk with God - Luke 9:18-25

Jesus prophesied his own death. The words of a true prophet carry such impact in the present that they also have an impact on the shape of the future. They certainly impacted on the disciples. Resurrection as shaped by our Heavenly Father, transmitted by the Holy Spirit through his Son, is the transformation and perpetuation of our identity forever. We can therefore never be comfortable with who we are as a Christian. We have to do all that we can with God's help to be the best person that we can be in following the pattern of conduct exhibited by Jesus of Nazareth. We don't just have a set of scriptural principles as guidelines for our life. We also have Jesus as the model for everything that we do. That's much tougher than laws carved in stone! The Sermon on the Mount shows how persistent Jesus was in exposing false motivations in his earthly pilgrimage.

The teaching of Jesus is that out of suffering comes life and renewed hope. The Cross is the symbol of suffering and death and Resurrection is the counter-symbol. The strange claim is made that the counterbalance of death is a perpetuation of life. The inevitable darkness and the valley of shadows is reversed and light floods the valley. Hope emerges from despair and endless renewal begins. Some of the representatives of Judaism cited by Jesus in the gospel scene believe in resurrection at the Last Day. Others write beautiful words in scrolls and fall in love with the words. Senior people staring at the abyss of death hear fresh words to inspire old dreams of eternity and a life lived with God forever. Some worship as priests and recall the offering the first fruits and the smoke of holocausts spearing to heaven. But their common mission is to crush the new dream. We cannot expect mercy from organized religion. Its curse is to lose love and subsume mercy in authority. Justice gets replaced by penalties and new life is hounded to death. Those who make love the centre of their life are urged to replace it with fearsome and reassuring dogmas.

Judgement replaces mercy and heaven descends into hell. There is no self-ish way of taking up our cross and following Christ. Taking up one's cross means self-denial. Denying self is an act of suffering. It requires effort and self-giving. Taking up one's cross daily is a constant matter. "For those who want to save their life will lose it". Saved for what? Protecting one's life is necessary, but giving our life into the hands of God is our best self-protection. The Silent Witness protects us at all times, and it also allows us to witness the passage of our thought in any moment, though it requires mindfulness. Losing does not mean the loss of a coin or a sheep, but giving up control and leaving all in the hands of God. That is a hard call indeed. Where have all the dreamers gone? What happened to their unfulfilled ramblings in search of themselves? Why am I glued to other people's agendas? Why have I spent so much time living out other people's rantings? Why not walk away into a new breeze that refreshes old hopes and creates new contours? I speak of the breeze of the Spirit as at Creation. Treasuring one's soul for its essential identity known only to us and to God is a core teaching of Jesus of Nazareth. No one can take love out of our heart or remove our integrity unless we permit it.

Bishop Arthur Jones

THIS WEEK:

Wednesday.

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

Thursday.

- Midweek Eucharist, 10:00am, Chapel

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS:

1 Kings 19:15-16, 19-21; Psalm 16; Galatians 5:1,13-25; Luke 9:51-62
