

Commentary on the Gospel for Thu, Apr 14th 2016

The readings today identify Jesus as the fulfillment of salvation history. The passage from the Acts of the Apostles presents the call of Philip to bring an understanding of Scripture to the Ethiopian. The Gospel shows Jesus as the Bread of Life. It follows in the same chapter as the miracles of the multiplication of the loaves and of Jesus walking on water. Both are passages that focus on bringing clarification. The Psalm centers on thanksgiving for deliverance at the hands of God.

My experiences these days leave me with a sense of turmoil. Civil discourse has given way to conflict and threats. I like to imagine a world where God's activity is easily identifiable, even if I am not looking for it. Unfortunately, in the current moment I seldom feel this is the case. I want to live in a world where I can have an unwavering trust in Divine Providence and prayers are routinely seen as answered. I want to live in culture of trust and respect. I want to be in an environment where if my faith weakens it is quickly restored. The imperfect world in which I live seems in some ways to find parallels in the world of that first Easter season. There is hope when faith is strong and there is doubt when it is not. That period between the first Easter and Pentecost was a time when the first Christians also suffered with fear and questioning until they had a set of clear-cut signs (those of the kind that I desire). Jesus was with them again, but often they did not recognize him. They were worried and concerned about the events that had transpired in the world in which they lived. The Easter season is often portrayed as the time of salvation and renewal. For me, and for many of those in the early Church, I do not think this is (or was) the necessarily case. When I am able to recognize God's hand in what is happening I find moments of great consolation, but this is a faith that is subject my perceptions and my moodiness. I look forward to another feast that is still a month away. I find myself more grateful for the gift of the Spirit. I find (like many of those in the early Church) it is through the experience of Pentecost that I better recognize and can hold in my heart that which the Easter season brings.

My prayer today is in anticipation of a better recognition of the gifts and joy of the current season.

Dear Lord,

Your gifts are many, but my attention span is short.

Your Son changed the world and brought us new hope.

Still I fail, I become discouraged, and I forget.

I am weak on my own, but Your Spirit renews my heart and soul.

I pray for the understanding of salvation history that we find in Acts.

I pray for the sense of deliverance that we find in the Psalm.

I pray for the confidence in the future that we find in the Gospel.

