

Commentary on the Gospel for Thu, Apr 18th 2013

Writing these reflections is a good exercise for me. It causes me to read, reflect, re-read, reflect again, etc. on the readings for the day, all the while praying that I can be hands and words for the Holy Spirit in what I write. I read these scripture passages more closely than I do in any other situation, which is not necessarily a good thing! I'm sometimes stumped by scripture passages, wondering what the passage means or wishing I had the historical context around what's happening in the passage. I oftentimes look up words (for example, eunuch) that might help shed some light on the passages, but I always feel that there's so much more that I could know about the scripture and it's meaning.

In this way I can relate to the Ethiopian eunuch that was reading from the prophet Isaiah in the first reading. No wonder he didn't understand what he was reading. Put yourself in his "chariot"... what could this mean without understanding the context?

Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter,

and as a lamb before its shearer is silent,

so he opened not his mouth.

In his humiliation justice was denied him.

Who will tell of his posterity?

For his life is taken from the earth.

How could he know who the "sheep" was without knowing the story of Jesus? He didn't have the context to understand. The eunuch was so moved by what Philip shared with him about Jesus that he wanted to be baptized in Christ at his first opportunity. Wow! To be filled with such fire and zeal after just learning about Jesus would be quite the experience.

How rare it seems that I feel overtly passionate about our faith. There are moments, of course, when that fire is within me, but more often I feel a quiet calling in regards to my faith. It drives me to be a more loving and more charitable person in my daily life; moments of high emotion are few and far between. And that's okay.

I come to know Jesus, his story, and his context more each day, which leads me slowly into a closer relationship with him. The more I learn, with my head and my heart, the more I am drawn to follow him. The Holy Spirit works more slowly in me than in the eunuch, but God knows best how to reach me and invite me into a deeper relationship. God calls us in different ways, in different places, and through different means. The important thing is that God calls us to a deeper relationship with him, and we respond to that call through love.

Carrie Pogge Wortmann