

Readings: Thursday, 3rd week of Easter

First Reading: Acts 8:26-40

An angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Go south towards the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza, the desert road." So he set out and it happened that an Ethiopian was passing along that way. He was an official in charge of the treasury of the queen of the Ethiopians; he had come on pilgrimage to Jerusalem and was on his way home. He was sitting in his carriage and reading the prophet Isaiah.

The Spirit said to Philip, "Go and catch up with that carriage." So Philip ran up and heard the man reading the prophet Isaiah; and he asked, "Do you really understand what you are reading?" The Ethiopian replied, "How can I, unless someone explains it to me?" He then invited Philip to get in and sit beside him. This was the passage of Scripture he was reading:

He was led like a sheep to be slaughtered; like a lamb that is dumb before the shearer, he did not open his mouth. He was humbled and deprived of his rights. Who can speak of his descendants? For he was uprooted from the earth.

The official asked Philip, "Tell me, please, does the prophet speak of himself or of someone else?"

Then Philip began to tell him the Good News of Jesus, using this text of Scripture as his starting point. As they traveled down the road they came to a place where there was some water. Then the Ethiopian official said, "Look, here is water; what is to keep me from being baptized?"

Then he ordered the carriage to stop; both Philip and the Ethiopian went down into the water and Philip baptized him. When they came out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord took Philip away. The Ethiopian saw him no more, but he continued on his way full of joy.

Philip found himself at Azotus, and he went about announcing the Good News in all the towns until he reached Caesarea.

Responsorial Psalm: Ps 66:8-9, 16-17, 20

R./ Let all the earth cry out to God with joy.

Bless our God, you peoples,
loudly sound his praise;
He has given life to our souls,
and has not let our feet slip.

R./ Let all the earth cry out to God with joy.

Hear now, all you who fear God, while I declare
what he has done for me.
When I appealed to him in words,
praise was on the tip of my tongue.

R./ Let all the earth cry out to God with joy.

Blessed be God who refused me not
my prayer or his kindness!

R./ Let all the earth cry out to God with joy.

Gospel Reading: Jn 6:44-51

Jesus addressed the crowd. "No one can come to me unless he is drawn by the Father who sent me; and I will raise him up on the last day. It has been written in the Prophets: They shall all be taught by God. So whoever listens and learns from the Father comes to me.

"For no one has seen the Father except the One who comes from God; he has seen the Father. Truly, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life.

"I am the bread of life. Though your ancestors ate the manna in the desert, they died. But here you have the bread which comes from heaven so that you may eat of it and not die.

"I am the living bread which has come from heaven; whoever eats of this bread will live forever. The bread I shall give is my flesh and I will give it for the life of the world."
