

Fifth Sunday of Easter

29 April 2018

Sentence In this is love, not that we loved God but that God loved us. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another.
1 John 4.10.11

Collect

God of deep soil and luxuriant growth;
you call us from our shallow selves to find our depth in you:
may we abide in him alone who can teach us who we are;
through Jesus Christ, the true vine. **Amen.**

A Reading from the Acts of the Apostles

Despite a biblical injunction against allowing a eunuch into Jewish worship (Deut. 23.1), this man is baptised since there is no status such as physical, gender, legal or social that excludes a person from joining the Church. The Ethiopian was probably an admirer of the Jewish faith and his baptism demonstrates the spread of the Christian gospel in the Gentile world.

An angel of the Lord said to Philip, 'Get up and go towards the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.' (This is a wilderness road.) So he got up and went. Now there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of the Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, in charge of her entire treasury. He had come to Jerusalem to worship and was returning home; seated in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah. Then the Spirit said to Philip, 'Go over to this chariot and join it.' So Philip ran up to it and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, 'Do you understand what you are reading?' He replied, 'How can I, unless someone guides me?' And he invited Philip to get in and sit beside him. Now the passage of the scripture that he was reading was this:

'Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter,
and like a lamb silent before its shearer,
so he does not open his mouth.
In his humiliation justice was denied him.
Who can describe his generation?'

For his life is taken away from the earth.’
 The eunuch asked Philip, ‘About whom, may I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?’ Then Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture, he proclaimed to him the good news about Jesus. As they were going along the road, they came to some water; and the eunuch said, ‘Look, here is water! What is to prevent me from being baptized?’ He commanded the chariot to stop, and both of them, Philip and the eunuch, went down into the water, and Philip baptized him. When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing. But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he was passing through the region, he proclaimed the good news to all the towns until he came to Caesarea. *Acts 8.26-40*

Reader For the word of the Lord

All Thanks be to God

Psalm 22.26-32 at 8am APBA page 243 at 10am sung

Responsorial Psalm 22

Andrew Moore



<p>1 My vows I will pay before <u>those</u> who fear him. The poor shall eat and shall <u>have</u> their fill. They shall praise the Lord, <u>those</u> who seek him. May their hearts live for <u>ever</u> and ever!</p>	<p>2 All the earth shall remember and return <u>to</u> the Lord, all families of the nations <u>worship</u> before him. They shall worship him, all the mighty <u>of</u> the earth; Before him shall bow all who go down <u>to</u> the dust.</p>
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3 And my soul shall live for him, my children serve him.
 They shall tell of the Lord to generations yet to come,
 Declare his faithfulness to peoples yet unborn:
 ‘These things the Lord has done.’

A Reading from the first letter of John

In earlier chapters, the author has stressed two signs of fellowship with God: faith in Christ and love of fellow Christians. Here we are told that if we do not actively love, we do not know God, because the very nature of God is love.

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. ⁸Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us.

By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Saviour of the world. God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. So we have known and believe the love that God has for us.

God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them. Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness on the day of judgement, because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love. We love because he first loved us. Those who say, 'I love God', and hate their brothers or sisters, are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen. The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also. *1 John 4.7-21*

Reader May your word live in us.

ALL And bear much fruit to your glory.

Gospel Acclamation

ALL Alleluia! Alleluia!

Cantor I am the way, the truth, and the life says the Lord:
no one comes to the Father, except through me.

ALL Alleluia!

Reader The Lord be with you

ALL And also with you

Reader A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

ALL Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ.

In Isaiah 5.1-7, when the vineyard yielded only wild grapes, God destroyed it. In John's Gospel, God is the vinegrower, Christ the vine (the godly vine of which Isaiah spoke), and members of the Church the fruit. Shared life with each other and with God is the basis for being fruitful but leaving this community ends productivity, and leads to destruction.

Jesus said to his disciples: 'I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine-grower. He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes* to make it bear more fruit. You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.'

John 15.1-8

Reader For the Gospel of the Lord

ALL Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ

Bible Readings 6 May 2018 Sixth Sunday of Easter

Acts 10.44-48 Psalm 98 1 John 5.1-12 John 15.9-17

Prayer for the Week

Saving God, who called your Church to witness that you were in Christ reconciling the world to yourself: help us so to proclaim the good news of your love, that all who hear it may be reconciled to you; through him who died for us and rose again and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Pray for the Faithful Departed We remember before God: George Granger, Jane Akehurst, June Manders, Reginald Weller, Cyril Sadler, John Rudolph Whitbourne, Thomas Whitbourne, Evelyn Cartledge, Stuart Budds and Reginald Edward Gregory MBE, whose anniversaries occur this week.

Commemorations of this week: May 1 Philip and James, *apostles and martyrs*. Philip was born in Bethsaida, became a disciple and persuaded Nathanael to follow Jesus also (John.1.43-51). He was with the apostles after the resurrection (Acts.1.13). He then disappears from history. James was the son of Zebedee and brother of the apostle John. He was a close disciple of Jesus and was present at the raising of Jairus's daughter, at the Transfiguration and in the Garden of Gethsemane. He was the first apostle to be martyred (Acts.12.2).

May 2 Athanasius, bishop of Alexandria (c.296-373). Attended the Council of Nicaea in 325 (from where we get the Nicene Creed) as a secretary to his bishop, and succeeded him in 328. A great fighter for orthodoxy against the Arians who did not believe in the divinity of Christ. He wrote numerous works, the most famous being on the Incarnation.