

# TRINITY NEWS

## Epiphany V The Light of the World John 8:12-20

“**I** am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life” (John 8:12). The Gospel of John is notable for 7 sayings that begin with “I am...”. The First is “I am the bread of life” (John 6: 35, 41,48); then John 8:12 as cited; “I am the door” (John 10:7); “I am the good shepherd” (John 10:11); “I am the resurrection and the life (John 11:25); “I am the way the truth and the life” (John 14:6); and “I am the true vine” (John 15:1).

Due attention is usually given the statements that follow “I am”, but **the pronoun** and **the verb to be** are immensely important in their own right. They are related to an incident at the burning Bush in Exodus 3:14 where God declares that he is “I am, the one who will be”. The name of God is Being. The Jews considered it so holy that they refused to pronounce it. We use Yahweh and Jehovah, but the Jews say Adonoy or write G-d or say and write ha-shem, “the Name”. Matthew in the New Testament, that most Jewish of Gospel writers, says “Kingdom of heaven” rather than “Kingdom of God.

These Seven Statements tell is a great deal about Jesus’ perception of himself and his role in the world. The “I am” that prefaces the sayings link his mindset and his person into God. He was not “truly human” if he did not search for his identity within himself and in his presentation amongst others. We are the same in our search for identity in ourselves and who we are on the stage of the world.

This week I wrote an article for all the retired bishops of Australia. The article is entitled **In the Company of Bishops for Twenty years**. I wrote about some of the bishops I had known in those 20 years including some of the intended readers. A dangerous exercise!

The most noticeable was the late Bishop John Hazelwood of Ballarat, a diocese in Victoria. “**John Hazelwood** was colourful, artistic, eccentric and occasionally quite brilliant. When I was seconded to St John’s College Morpeth from Ballarat diocese as New Testament Lecturer, he came one day to St. John’s chapel and swept in with his usual style, the prelate personified. The Holy Spirit came with him and filled the chapel. I almost burst into tears as I needed that spiritual refreshment right then. He struggled with his own demons as we all do. He couldn’t take his eyes off the bishop’s chair when he went to Christ Church Cathedral in Ballarat after his retirement. Being a bishop totally fulfilled him. But we are more than our role.”

All of us are more than our role in life. Deep down is the “I am”, which is not our public presentation or even the estimation of our own mind, but a hidden and yet luminous sense of being that has our name on it. When we realise this we step into a large place where there is peace and freedom. We may go on to say I am such and such. This is my name and I will try to honour it with my life and my being. We may apologise for our conduct and we may berate ourselves inside for being drawn into things that we should never have been drawn into at all. But we cannot apologise for that which rises up within us and makes us who we are as a distinctive person in the world. We are distinct before we achieve anything because no one has ever lived on this earth who is like us and no one will come after. Rejoice in that distinctiveness and live it! Jesus said he was the light of the world, and he undoubtedly meant the light of God, the Shekinah, not now in a pillar of fire by night or in a cloud by day as in the Exodus, but in a person. He must have rejoiced when he said those words because there were about his destiny and his distinctive place in the world. But nothing describes his inner personal reality. Only he could know it. Only we can know who we are, our “I am”, and name it.

Bishop Arthur Jones

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## **THIS WEEK:**

### **Wednesday, February 12.**

- Bible Study, 10:00 a.m.
- Vestry meeting, 6:30pm, Rectory.

### **Thursday, February 13.**

- Midweek Eucharist, 10:00 a.m., Chapel

## **NEXT WEEK:**

### **Commissioning of New Vestry and Delegates to Diocesan Convention.**

### **Readings for next Sunday:**

Ecclesiasticus 15:11-20

Psalm 119

I Corinthians 3:1-9

Matthew 5:21-24, 27-30, 33-37

## **TO PLAN:**

- March 4, Shrove Tuesday/ Pancake Supper.
- March 5, Ash Wednesday.