

# TRINITY NEWS

## Conversations with Christ in Galilee and Now

Words flow out of us like water out of a tap. Talk shows on television and radio go on endlessly. But we can switch them off when the din becomes too much. Occasionally we find a little verbal peace when we sit with someone who draws out words from us that express what we really feel. We walk away with a shine on our face because we have not only been heard; we have also been encouraged to speak of our own identity and feelings. The words out of the tap have become real communication.

Listen to the conversation in John 1: 43-51. In Galilee one day Jesus of Nazareth said to Philip from Bethsaida, "Follow me". This comes after the call of Peter and Andrew who were also from Bethsaida. So the writer is telling us that Philip may already know about Jesus. Then Philip finds Nathanael and tells him that "Jesus the son of Joseph from Nazareth" is the one that "Moses and also the prophets" wrote about. That is, a messianic figure who would herald a new age.

But Nathanael, perhaps quoting a proverb, has doubts that anything good can come out of Galilee. We are all biased in some way. Philip invites him to come and see Jesus. As they draw near to Jesus, he says that Nathanael is an "Israelite in whom there is no deceit".

Nathanael wants to know how Jesus knows about him. Jesus responds that he saw him under the fig tree before Philip called him. Nathanael is astounded and addresses him as rabbi and says that Jesus is "the son of God and the king of Israel".

The conversation continues and it ends with a punch line at John 1:51.

Let us enter this conversation in a personal sense:

1. Every Christian is called to follow Christ. It is our vocation and our calling. We all begin with a local hometown identity and it follows us all of our life. Philip had described Jesus as "the son of Joseph from Nazareth". This is the proper Jewish description of him, without reference to Christian teaching about his supernatural conception.
2. Like Philip, we cannot hide our vocation and calling. We have to share it. We cannot conceal it if it is real.

3. We have to trust that what Christ offers is real. We should invite people to “come and see”. Never before in my lifetime has it been more important to make the message of the love of Christ known to a violent and broken world. Christ is the opposite of religious hatred.

4. We may say “our Father” and pray to the Holy Spirit, but all of our prayers and reflections have to do with Jesus.

5. We have to live with the reality that Christ knows everything about us. If we want to enter the presence of God and the angels we have Christ to climb the ‘ladder’ with us. We are not on our own because the love of Christ “constrains us” and gives us our model of what God is really like.

Something or someone greater is always waiting to be there for us. Christianity is the love of Christ. It is nothing more, nothing less. It is total love with a total person. We may get it wrong, but the loving model never goes away. Nathanael had his titles for Jesus and we have ours. My favourite is *Yeshua*, the name his mother used when she spoke to him in her soft Aramaic tones. We say, “*Yeshua* we love you because you first loved us”.

Bishop Arthur Jones

---

## **THIS WEEK:**

### **January 21, Wednesday.**

- Bible Study, 10am
- Group Study, 7:30pm, Parish Office.

### **January 22, Thursday.**

- Midweek Eucharist, 10:00am, Chapel.

## **NEXT WEEK'S READINGS:**

Jeremiah 3:21-4:2; Psalm 130; 1 Corinthians 7:17-23; Mark 1:14-20

## **TO PLAN:**

**Annual General Meeting Feb. 1, after the 9:30am service**

---