

A Reading from the New Testament: from Acts 8:26-40

An angel of God spoke to Philip and said, "Be ready to set out at noon along the road that goes to Gaza, the desert road." So Philip began his journey.

It happened that an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official in charge of the entire treasury of Candace, the ruler of Ethiopia, had come to Jerusalem on a pilgrimage and was returning home. He was sitting in his carriage and reading the prophet Isaiah.

The Spirit said to Philip, "Go up and meet that carriage."

When Philip ran up, he heard the eunuch reading Isaiah the prophet and asked, "Do you understand what you are reading?"

"How can I," the eunuch replied, "unless someone explains it to me?" With that, he invited Philip to get in the carriage with him. This was the passage of scripture being read:

"You are like a sheep being led to slaughter,
you are like a lamb that is mute in front of its shearers:
like them, you never open your mouth.

You have been humiliated
and have no one to defend you.
Who will ever talk about your descendants,
since your life on earth has been cut short?"

The eunuch said to Philip, "Tell me, if you will, about whom the prophet is talking—himself or someone else?"

So Philip proceeded to explain the Good News about Jesus to him.

Further along the road they came to some water, and the eunuch said, "Look, there is some water right there. Is there anything to keep me from being baptized?"*

He ordered the carriage to stop; then Philip and the eunuch both went down into the water, and Philip baptized him. When they came out of the water, the Spirit of God snatched Philip away; the eunuch didn't see him anymore, and went on his way rejoicing.

Philip found himself at Ashdod next, and he went about proclaiming the Good News in all the towns, until he came to Caesarea

For stories from the early Christian community
thanks be to God.

Gospel: Listen for words of faith in the Gospel of John 15:1-8

“I am the true vine,
and God is the vine grower
who cuts off every branch in me that doesn't bear fruit,
but prunes the fruitful ones
to increase their yield.

You've been pruned already,
thanks to the word that I have spoken to you.

Live on in me,
as I do in you.
Just as a branch cannot bear fruit of itself
apart from the vine,
neither can you bear fruit
apart from me.

I am the vine;
you are the branches.
Those who live in me and I in them
will bear abundant fruit,
for apart from me you can do nothing.

Those who don't live in me
are like withered, rejected branches,
to be picked up and thrown on the fire and burned.

If you live on in me,
and my words live on in you,
ask whatever you want
and it will be done for you.

God will be glorified
if you bear much fruit
and thus prove to be my disciples

For the good news of divine love
Thanks be to God.