

GUIDANCE AND PRESENCE

Acts 8:26-40 John 6:44-51

The twofold reality of the Church and hence of every Christian is well pictured between the two readings of today's Liturgy. The cheerful deacon Philip is a type of church. He chose to travel the same road as the Ethiopian and he did not shrink from connecting with this foreigner on his way back from Jerusalem. Christians are people open to engage and this is what it means to be missionary. When Philip sees the Ethiopian grappling with the Scriptures, unable to understand their mysterious message as he read from Isaiah, Philip asks him "Do you understand what you are reading?" This question was an entry point for Philip. The pilgrim replies politely, "How can I unless someone explains it to me?" Philip becomes an instrument to provide guidance to strengthen the faith of the foreigner. The helpful, hospitable church represented by Philip is the ideal urged on us by Pope Francis — who wants to see the joy of the Gospel shine on the lives of all who welcome it.

We too can help shed light on the struggles of people's lives. We too can as well help to spread the good news, like the Ethiopian himself who went home to bring the faith to his own country.

The church and every believer are not only for providing guidance, but we ought to be a sacramental presence of Jesus and this presence keeps our faith strong. We cannot forget his words: "I am the living bread come down from heaven. Whoever eats this bread that shall live forever."

Fr Naz, 30/4/2020