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EPIPHANY 2B

14th January 2024

A short act of worship and daily devotions

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Opening Prayers

Lord of Light,
Prince of Peace,
Almighty Counsellor,
Today I come to worship you, and look to you to shine your light into my life.
Come Lord Jesus, by your Spirit.

If you have a candle, find it and something to light it. Put it somewhere you can see it. If you do not have a candle, use a lamp.

As you light the candle, or light the lamp, say these words: "the light shines in the darkness and the darkness can never put it out".

Sit in silence and notice the light and the shadows in the room. When you are ready, offer this time of worship to God:

Jesus, you are the light of the world, the light of my life, I offer this time to you in worship and prayer and praise. Amen.

You may now wish to say the Lord's Prayer in a version or translation with which you are familiar.

Reading: John 1:43-51 – [Click for reading](#)

Reflections on the reading

In today's gospel reading from John 1, we encounter the story of Philip inviting Nathanael to meet Jesus. Nathanael initially doubts that anything good can come from Nazareth, but Philip responds with a simple, profound invitation: "Come and see."

This passage challenges us to consider two important aspects of our faith:

1. **Doubt and Prejudice:** Just as Nathanael had doubts about Nazareth, we often harbour doubts and prejudices about people, situations, or ideas. These doubts can blind us to the potential for goodness and blessings in unexpected places. The challenge is to recognise and confront our doubts, allowing ourselves to be open to God's work in unexpected ways.
2. **Invitation and Encounter:** Philip's invitation, "Come and see," is an invitation to encounter Jesus personally. It's an invitation to experience God's presence, love, and transformative power made incarnate in Jesus. We, too, are called to extend this invitation to ourselves and to others, inviting them to encounter Christ in our words and actions.

Consider these questions for your personal devotion:

- What doubts or prejudices do I hold that may be hindering my faith or openness to God's work in my life?

Am I willing to set aside my doubts and preconceived notions, and, like Nathanael, be open to the possibility of encountering Christ in unexpected ways?

- How can I extend the invitation to others to "come and see" Jesus through my life and testimony?
- Do I actively seek moments of personal encounter with Christ through prayer, Scripture, and worship?

The challenge in John 1:43-51 is to embrace the transformative power of encountering Jesus and to be open to God's work in the midst of doubt and uncertainty. As you reflect on this passage, may you be inspired to invite others to "come and see" the incredible journey of faith and the life-changing encounter with the Son of God.

Responding through singing

You might like to listen to and/or sing along to some or all of these songs, as you reflect on today's reflection and what it means for your life.

545 STF – Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart - [YouTube](#)

662 STF – Have you heard God's voice; has your heart been stirred? - [YouTube](#)

552 STF – Here am I, Lord - [YouTube](#)

673 STF – Will you come and follow me? - [YouTube](#)

Responding through action

When was the last time you told someone your 'testimony'? Testimony is a way of talking about our lives and stories that shows we are able to recognise God is at work in and through us. It might involve a 'conversion' moment, or it might involve dozens of 'conversion moments', it might grapple with your own doubts and prejudice and show how God is working through you despite your failings.

Could you make some time today to write out, or draw, or say aloud some of your testimony? Is there a story you can tell that demonstrates God at work in your life?

These stories can be a source of encouragement for others – people who have faith and those who have none – not necessarily because we are trying to convert them to our way of thinking, but because we can open up the possibility for people to reflect on their own lives and see God at work. Could you swap stories/testimonies with someone this week?

Blessing

So, people of God,
I go from this place, hearing words of encouragement from the Creator,
I go from this place, inspired to follow in the ways of the Christ,
I go from this place, transformed by the power of the Spirit,
Travel with me, triune God, that I may come to know you more each day.
Amen.

Prayers and Prayer Pointers for the Week Ahead

Monday 15th January

- God is everywhere, if only you could be still enough to notice.
- Today, your challenge is to notice.
- Look for God in the sunrise, the birdsong, the taste of pizza, the comfort of your sofa, the embrace of a loved one, a text message that makes you smile...whatever it is.
- Notice.

Tuesday 16th January

- God of all grace,
Despite centuries of hoping, praying, campaigning and conscious objection, we still live in a world surrounded by war and violence.
Today, in your prayers, let us call on politicians to prevent militaries and militias from using child soldiers – anywhere in the world – our prayers are for peace.
- God of peace, show me what is mine to do to build a more peaceful world. Help me to do my bit, to play my part.
- Amen.

Wednesday 17th January

- Draw a picture of your local church. Include on the picture all the ways you see God at work, and all the things you want to ask God to work in. Pray about it.

Thursday 18th January

- Write a note or a message to a friend with a Bible verse in it that you think might be relevant to your life. Tell them you're thinking of them, and pray about them as they receive it.

Friday 19th January

- On this Friday, let us take a moment to look back on the week just past. What is your 'word of the week'? What one word might you use to sum up the week just gone, and how it was for you? Perhaps you can't keep it to one word, but just use this space to reflect on all you've been through, all you have achieved, all you have learned.
- Thank you God, for this week. For its challenges and its blessings. Help me to keep an open mind as I head into the weekend and beyond, that I can continue to learn and grow as a disciple of you.
- In Jesus, name we pray. Amen.

Saturday 20th January

- God of all grace, I am seeking to know more about you, use this day to show me something new. Open my eyes that I might see the wonder of your creation. Open my heart that I might feel the depth of relationship with my brothers and sisters in the world around me. Open my ears that I might hear your still small voice, whispering to me in the quiet moments of today. Open my hands that I might do the work you are calling me to do.
- Show me. Show me. Show me. Amen.