



Grace Notes

Friday of Easter 4
30 April 2021
St. Philip and St. James the Apostles



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John 1: 43-51

⁴³The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, "Follow me." ⁴⁴Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. ⁴⁵Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found him of whom Moses in the Law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." ⁴⁶Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see." ⁴⁷Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him and said of him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit!" ⁴⁸Nathanael said to him, "How do you know me?" Jesus answered him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you." ⁴⁹Nathanael answered him, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!" ⁵⁰Jesus answered him, "Because I said to you, 'I saw you under the fig tree,' do you believe? You will see greater things than these." ⁵¹And he said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man."

Heavenly Father, give us the opportunity to invite others to come and see Jesus. Likewise, bless our church with members eager to share the good news. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Come and See

May 1 on the church calendar is designated as the day of St. Philip and St. James the Apostles. Today I would like to consider the initial appearance of Philip in John's Gospel, the only Gospel where he is mentioned.

We have probably all heard the excited cries of a young child who says, "Come and see." If they are out in the woods, it might be a flower, a frog, a spider, or a snake. If it is in the house, it could be a drawing they made, a picture they found, a new skill they learned, or just something that struck their fancy. That is how most people share their passions, their amusements, their interests, or their concern with someone else; they say, "Come and see." This is also the way it works with sharing our faith with others. We see this in our text, as Philip goes to Nathanael and says, "Come and see."

Philip went to Nathanael to share the good news. Philip and Nathanael were friends. In fact, their friendship was confirmed and enhanced by the sharing of this news of Jesus. Surely, we could do the same and talk to at least one other person about Jesus or invite them to church.

How does Jesus find the people whom he calls? His method is disarmingly simple. He walks around and engages with people whom he has contact. Jesus went to Galilee and by doing so he found Philip. Do you think God could use this method with us? As we go about our daily activities—at work, in the community, on the street—we encounter people we know, who would be blessed if we would invite them to come and see Jesus.

They may naturally have objections or questions. Nathanael questioned Nazareth as the location of the Messiah. *Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?"* In Nathanael's mind Nazareth was an unlikely place from which the Messiah would come. He had a different understanding or expectation of who this Messiah would be.

People today are skeptical or have questions. They have questions about religion, about creation, about morality, about eternal life, about what and why we believe.

Invite them to come and see. Philip did not debate Nathanael, he simply said, "Come and see." With the advent of YouTube everyone can record their feats and exploits. Whether it is recording a stunt on a skateboard or making a basket in the game, parents and friends are recording such activities. In a sense the person on the YouTube video is saying, "Look at me, look at me." "Come and see." This is the way of the Gospel as well.

Our invitation for others to come and see Jesus may begin with a simple observation of our faith and life during good times and bad. It may be the simple testimony of trust and hope we keep in our heart. We can simply invite people to come and see at church or Bible study.

When we invite others to see Jesus, we want them to encounter Him where He has promised to be – in His Word. We would also pray that they see Jesus in us and in the lives of fellow Christians who love and care for one another.

Please pray for:

- Those who do not yet know Jesus as their Lord and Savior.
- The church that she may boldly proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ and Him crucified.
- Those who are sick or hospitalized, that they might find peace and healing in Jesus.
- The effective use and distribution the coronavirus vaccine.