

A Message from our Rector

Trees play a big part in the Bible. In Genesis, Adam and Eve are given the opportunity to eat from the Tree of Life, but of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, (Genesis 2:9) they were strictly prohibited from eating its fruit. Nevertheless, they eat from it, and at that very moment, they felt ashamed and hid. (Genesis 3: 6-7) It is interesting to point out that in verse 7 it says that they sewed fig leaves to cover themselves like aprons. Some biblical scholars say that since they used fig leaves and, considering this occurs immediately after they eat of the forbidden tree, the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil was a fig tree!

The fig tree has always been prominent in the biblical narrative, as witnessed in Genesis, but also in the Gospel reading for today, St. John 1: 43-51. Phillip introduced Nathanael, who was standing under a fig tree, to Jesus. (St. John 1:45) Both of these men would eventually go on to be loyal apostles of Jesus and give their lives as martyrs.

Nathanael was sceptical of Jesus and said to Phillip, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" (St. John 1:46) As Nathanael approached Jesus, he made an exclusive statement about him: "Here is truly an Israelite, in whom there is no deceit." Jesus and Nathanael met face to face. In their first conversation, Jesus told Nathanael that he had seen him under the fig tree

In the book of Genesis, Adam and Eve used the fig tree to cover up the shame of sin. In the Gospel of John, the fig tree was a place where Nathanael stood underneath as a starting point of his journey with Jesus. Both stand in stark contrast to each other.

As Christians either we can live a life of integrity, honesty and good character or we can live with deceit, trickery, and dishonesty. The latter is represented by the tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, and the former the fig tree that Nathanael stood under. Which tree are we going to choose? Adam and Eve represent dishonesty toward God. Nathanael represents honest toward God.

Are we like Adam and Eve or like Nathanael?

Thoughts and prayers
Godfrey

