

Homily for the Sixth Sunday of Easter Year A

A village in Africa was deeply wounded by division among its people. They lived side by side but never spoke to each other. Because of this, fear, anger, enmity and misunderstanding had built a strong wall between them.

One day, a Franciscan missionary came to the village. He remained neutral and did not take sides. Instead, he began to help everyone, he taught the children, cared for the sick, spoke about Jesus and his gospel and listened patiently to both groups. At first, people watched him with suspicion. But slowly, his simple acts of kindness began to touch their hearts.

Gradually, anger and division that once separated the two groups slowly started to disappear. One evening, something beautiful happened. For the first time, both groups gathered together to thank the teacher. Looking at them, he simply said, *“Peace begins when we stop seeing each other as enemies and start seeing each other as brothers.”*

This story beautifully reflects the heart of the **first reading**, where **Philip goes down to Samaria, a region long divided from Jerusalem by history, hatred, and religious differences**. Jews and Samaritans lived side by side but would not speak to each other, just like the two divided groups in the African village.

One example we read the gospel of Luke 9:51–56, that tells how the Samaritans hated the Jews, *“The Rejection by a Samaritan Village*. When Jesus tries to pass through a Samaritan village, the people **refuse to welcome Him** simply because He is a Jew traveling to Jerusalem.

James and John get angry and want to call down fire, but Jesus rebukes them. Again, tension, division, hostility, yet Jesus chooses peace and patience.

Philip, one of the first Seven Deacons, going to Samaria to proclaim Christ. As *The Samaritans* listened to Philip, they witnessed the power of God at work, miracles take place, lives are touched, and *faith in Jesus* begins to grow in their hearts and welcomed the message of the Gospel with great joy.

Soon after, the apostles Peter and John come from Jerusalem. They pray over the new believers and lay their hands on them so that they may receive the Holy Spirit. In that moment, it becomes clear that the same Spirit who worked powerfully in Jerusalem is now at work in Samaria, bringing healing, unity, and new life.

This reading reminds us that wherever Christ is proclaimed and welcomed, the Holy Spirit transforms hearts, heals divisions, and brings new life.

In today's Gospel also we hear that *Jesus promises, the Father sends us the Advocate, the Holy Spirit*, to remain with us always and guide us into peace.

May this same Spirit help us see one another not as strangers or opponents but as brothers and sisters in Christ. May God bless all of us. May God bless all of us. Amen.