



## The Nourishing Vocation Project Near and Now:

*Vocation: Who are you called to be? What are you called to do?*

### Warm-up Question

*When have you interacted with someone who is very different from yourself? Describe the encounter.*



"IMG 7860F Narcisse Diaz de la Pena. 1807-1876. Paris Barbizon. La route sous Bois. The road under Wood. Vers 1865. Paris Orsay." by [jean.louis.mazieres](#) is licensed under [CC BY-NC-SA 2.0](#).

### Discussion Questions

1. What do you see in this image?
2. What do you feel looking at this image?
3. What stories from your own life does this image bring to mind?
4. What stories of the world does this image bring to mind?

## Get up and go

Read [Acts 8:26-40](#)

### Bible Story Reflection

So much detail is packed into this scene. Notice the urgency and immediacy throughout the whole story. First, the angel said get up and go south on the road, and so Philip went. Then, the Spirit, not an angel, said go over to the chariot, and Philip ran. As soon as the unnamed eunuch saw water, he asked to be baptized and commanded the chariot to stop. As soon as the eunuch came out of the water, Philip was snatched away, and the eunuch went on his way rejoicing. Both of the characters display an openness and obedience on many levels.

As we engage with this story and these characters, think of the many and vast differences between Philip and the eunuch. Philip was likely Greek and fair skinned; the eunuch was likely African and dark skinned. Philip was a Christian, and the eunuch perhaps a Jew. The eunuch had status and was likely wealthy, having at least enough money for schooling and a copy of the scroll of Isaiah. Philip left his job or trade and became an apostle. And much could be said or speculated about the eunuch's sexuality or bodily orientation; yet, Philip seemed unconcerned about either. More than just words were shared between these two. By the end, these very different people from very different places became siblings in Christ.

This encounter was undoubtedly divinely inspired, with the Spirit leading Philip to the right place and time, the reading of the passage from Isaiah, the eunuch humbly willing to be taught, and the water along the road. The story illustrates that the Spirit will lead to unpredictable places and unfamiliar people so that the good news of Jesus reaches the ends of the earth ([see Acts 1:8](#)). As we reflect on this story for our own congregations and our lives, be inspired by the obedience to "get up and go," the courage and humility to invite others in, and the joy that comes from hearing the good news of Jesus.

### Discussion Questions

1. How do you think Philip asked his opening question? What was his tone?
2. What does the eunuch's response to the question tell us about the eunuch?
3. Why does it feel hard or even scary to engage with someone very different from yourself?
4. How do you think the eunuch would tell their own story? How would Philip tell it?
5. Have you felt the Spirit guiding you in a clear direction? What did you do?
6. Tell of a time you rejoiced after hearing the good news of Jesus.
7. Where are encounters like this one from Acts 8 taking place today?
8. How and where is the Spirit guiding your congregation?... guiding you?



### **Activity Suggestions**

Visit a place or go to an event where the audience will largely be different than you, whether that be in class, sexual orientation, race, or religion. Reflect upon the experience with these questions: Given this experience, who am I called to be? What am I called to do? Why am I here?

Remember your baptisms together. Put some water in a bowl and form a circle. Have each person turn to their neighbor on the left, dip their finger in the bowl, and mark the sign of the cross, remembering that you are a beloved child of God.

Get up and go. Find a “wilderness road” or a path in nature and go for a walk. As you walk, think about the roads God might be leading you down and pray for the Spirit’s guidance.

### **Prayer Concerns**

Those who fear people different than themselves; those who feel called to leave where they are, and those unsure of where God is guiding.

### **Closing Prayer**

Move me to act, O God, when I hear your voice calling me. In the name of +Jesus, Amen.

