

Daily Parish Communication

May 3, 3034

Good Morning!

Adoration following the morning Mass till 4:00 PM

1. Today's Readings: [Feast of Saints Philip and James, Apostles | USCCB](#)

2. The RE Corner with Jan Heithaus: How much do you know about the 2 apostles, Philip and James the Lesser? Having read about them in the New Testament and heard about them in homilies, you may know something about them. But knowing more about the apostles, those whom Our Lord chose as the foundation stones of our Faith, is important.

3. Quote of the Day: Jesus gives instructions to the Apostles

~Jesus sent out these twelve after instructing them thus, "Do not go into pagan territory or enter a Samaritan town. Go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. As you go, make this proclamation: 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, drive out demons. Without cost you have received; without cost you are to give. Do not take gold or silver or copper for your belts; no sack for the journey, or a second tunic, or sandals, or walking stick. The laborer deserves his keep. Whatever town or village you enter, look for a worthy person in it, and stay there until you leave. As you enter a house, wish it peace. If the house is worthy, let your peace come upon it; if not, let your peace return to you. Whoever will not receive you or listen to your words—go outside that house or town and shake the dust from your feet. Amen, I say to you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that town." *MT: 5-15*

***St. Philip and St. James the Lesser, Pray for Us!***

***St. Joseph, Pray for Us!***

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## St. Philip, Apostle

*(address given by Pope Benedict XVI)*

Today we meet Philip. He always comes fifth in the lists of the Twelve (cf. Mt 10:3; Mk 3:18; Lk 6:14; Acts 1:13); hence, he is definitely among the first.

Although Philip was of Jewish origin, his name is Greek, like that of Andrew, and this is a small sign of cultural openness that must not be underestimated. The information we have on him is provided by John's Gospel. Like Peter and Andrew, he is a native of Bethsaida (cf. Jn 1:44), a town that belonged to the Tetrarchy of a son of Herod the Great, who was also called Philip (cf. Lk 3:1).

The Fourth Gospel recounts that after being called by Jesus, Philip meets Nathanael and tells him: "We have found him of whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph" (Jn 1:45). Philip does not give way to Nathanael's somewhat skeptical answer ("Can anything good come out of Nazareth?") and firmly retorts: "Come and see!" (Jn 1:46).

In his dry but clear response, Philip displays the characteristics of a true witness: he is not satisfied with presenting the proclamation theoretically, but directly challenges the person addressing him by suggesting he have a personal experience of what he has been told.

The same two verbs are used by Jesus when two disciples of John the Baptist approach him to ask him where he is staying. Jesus answers: "Come and see" (cf. Jn 1:38-39).

### **'Come and see'**

We can imagine that Philip is also addressing us with those two verbs that imply personal involvement. He is also saying to us what he said to Nathanael: "Come and see". The Apostle engages us to become closely acquainted with Jesus.

In fact, friendship, true knowledge of the other person, needs closeness and indeed, to a certain extent, lives on it. Moreover, it should not be forgotten that according to what Mark writes, Jesus chose the Twelve primarily "to be with him" (Mk 3:14); that is, to share in his life and learn directly from him not only the style of his behavior, but above all who he really was.

Indeed, only in this way, taking part in his life, could they get to know him and subsequently, proclaim him.

Later, in Paul's Letter to the Ephesians, one would read that what is important is to "learn Christ" (4:20): therefore, not only and not so much to listen to his teachings and words as rather to know him in person, that is, his humanity and his divinity, his mystery and his beauty. In fact, he is not only a Teacher but a Friend, indeed, a Brother.

How will we be able to get to know him properly by being distant? Closeness, familiarity and habit make us discover the true identity of Jesus Christ. The Apostle Philip reminds us precisely of this. And thus he invites us to "come" and "see", that is, to enter into contact by listening, responding and communion of life with Jesus, day by day.

Then, on the occasion of the multiplication of the loaves, he received a request from Jesus as precise as it was surprising: that is, where could they buy bread to satisfy the hunger of all the people who were following him (cf. Jn6:5). Then Philip very realistically answered: "Two hundred denarii would not buy enough bread for each of them to get a little" (Jn 6:7).

Here one can see the practicality and realism of the Apostle who can judge the effective implications of a situation.

We then know how things went. We know that Jesus took the loaves and after giving thanks, distributed them. Thus, he brought about the multiplication of the loaves.

It is interesting, however, that it was to Philip himself that Jesus turned for some preliminary help with solving the problem: this is an obvious sign that he belonged to the close group that surrounded Jesus.

On another occasion very important for future history, before the Passion some Greeks who had gone to Jerusalem for the Passover "came to Philip... and said to him, 'Sir, we wish to see Jesus'. Philip went and told Andrew; Andrew went with Philip, and they told Jesus" (cf. Jn 12:20-22).

Once again, we have an indication of his special prestige within the Apostolic College. In this case, Philip acts above all as an intermediary between the request of some Greeks — he probably spoke Greek and could serve as an interpreter — and Jesus; even if he joined Andrew, the other Apostle with a Greek name, he was in any case the one whom the foreigners addressed.

This teaches us always to be ready to accept questions and requests, wherever they come from, and to direct them to the Lord, the only one who can fully satisfy them. Indeed, it is important to know that the prayers of those who approach us are not ultimately addressed to us, but to the Lord: it is to him that we must direct anyone in need. So it is that each one of us must be an open road towards him!

### **Finding God and True Life**

There is then another very particular occasion when Philip makes his entrance. During the Last Supper, after Jesus affirmed that to know him was also to know the Father (cf. Jn 14:7), Philip quite ingenuously asks him: "Lord, show us the Father, and we shall be satisfied" (Jn 14:8). Jesus answered with a gentle rebuke: "Have I been with you so long, and yet you do not know me, Philip? He who has seen me has seen the Father: how can you say, 'Show us the Father?' Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father in me?... Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father in me" (Jn 14:9-11).

These words are among the most exalted in John's Gospel. They contain a true and proper revelation. At the end of the Prologue to his Gospel, John says: "No one has ever seen God; the only Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he has made him known" (Jn 1:18).

Well, that declaration which is made by the Evangelist is taken up and confirmed by Jesus himself, but with a fresh nuance. In fact, whereas John's Prologue speaks of an explanatory intervention by Jesus through the words of his teaching, in his answer to Philip Jesus refers to his own Person as such, letting it be understood that it is possible to understand him not only through his words but rather, simply through what he is.

To express ourselves in accordance with the paradox of the Incarnation we can certainly say that God gave himself a human face, the Face of Jesus, and consequently, from now on, if we truly want to know the Face of God, all we have

to do is to contemplate the Face of Jesus! In his Face we truly see who God is and what he looks like!

The Evangelist does not tell us whether Philip grasped the full meaning of Jesus' sentence. There is no doubt that he dedicated his whole life entirely to him. According to certain later accounts (Acts of Philip and others), our Apostle is said to have evangelized first Greece and then Frisia, where he is supposed to have died, in Hierapolis, by a torture described variously as crucifixion or stoning.

Let us conclude our reflection by recalling the aim to which our whole life must aspire: to encounter Jesus as Philip encountered him, seeking to perceive in him God himself, the heavenly Father. If this commitment were lacking, we would be reflected back to ourselves as in a mirror and become more and more lonely! Philip teaches us instead to let ourselves be won over by Jesus, to be with him and also to invite others to share in this indispensable company; and in seeing, finding God, to find true life.

## **St. James the Lesser**

St. James, to distinguish him from the other apostle of the same name, the son of Zebedee, was called the Less, which appellation is supposed to have taken its rise, either from his having been called later to the apostleship than the former, or from the lowness of his stature, or from his youth. He is also known by the title of James the Just, a denomination all agree with Hegesippus and St. Clement of Alexandria, to have been given on account of his eminent sanctity. He was the son of Alpheus and Mary, the sister of the Blessed Virgin and seems to have been born some years before our Lord. Jesus came with his brethren, and probably St. James among the rest, to settle in Capharnaum, at the beginning of his ministry. James and his brother Jude were called to the apostleship in the second year of Christ's preaching, soon after the Pasch, in the year 31. He was favored with an extraordinary apparition of his Master after his resurrection. Clement of Alexandria says that Christ being risen from the dead, communicated the gift of science to SS. James the Just, John, and Peter, and that they imparted it to the other apostles. We are told by SS. Jerome and Epiphanius, that our Lord, at his ascension, recommended his church of Jerusalem to St. James; in consequence whereof the apostles, before their dispersion, constituted him bishop of that city. It was probably for a mark of his

episcopal authority, and as an ensign of his dignity, that he wore on his head a lamina, or plate of gold, as is recounted by St. Epiphanius. Polycrates, quoted by Eusebius, testifies, that St. John did the same: others relate the like of St. Mark. It was probably done in imitation of the Jewish high priest.

St. James governed that church in perpetual dangers, from the fury of the people and their violent persecutions; but his singular virtue procured him the veneration of the Jews themselves. As to his sanctity, Eusebius and St. Jerome give from Hegesippus the following account concerning him: "He was always a virgin, and was a Nazarite, or one consecrated to God. In consequence of which he was never shaved, never cut his hair, never drank any wine or other strong liquor; moreover, he never used any bath, or oil to anoint his limbs, and never ate of any living creature except when of precept, as the paschal lamb: he never wore sandals, never used any other clothes than one single linen garment. He prostrated so much in prayer, that the skin of his knees and forehead was hardened like to camels' hoofs." St. Epiphanius says, that, in a great drought, on stretching out his arms to heaven, he, by his prayers, instantly obtained rain. His eminent sanctity made even the Jews style him the just man: and Origen observes that Josephus himself gives him that epithet, though it is not to be found now in Josephus' works. The same reverence for his person procured him the privilege of entering at pleasure into the Sanctum or Holy place, namely, that part of the temple where none but the priests were allowed by the law to enter. St. Jerome adds that the Jews strove, out of respect, who should touch the hem of his garment. In the year 51, he assisted at the council of the apostles, held at Jerusalem, about the observance of circumcision, and the other legal ceremonies of the law of Moses. Here, after having confirmed what St. Peter said, he devised the sentence which the apostles drew up on that occasion. This apostle being bishop of a church, which then chiefly consisted of Jewish converts, tolerated the use of the legal ceremonies, and, together with others, advised St. Paul to purify himself and offer sacrifice. He is the author of a canonical epistle which he wrote in Greek. It is at the head of those called <catholic>, or universal, because addressed not to any one particular church, but to the whole body of the converted Jews dispersed throughout the then known world. It was penned sometime after those of St. Paul to the Galatians, in 55, and to the Romans in 58. It could not, therefore, be written before the year 59, fourteen years after the death of St. James the greater. The author's view in this epistle is to refute the false

teachers, who, abusing certain expressions in St. Paul's writings, pretended that faith alone was sufficient to justification without good works: whereas, without these, he declares our faith is dead. He adds excellent precepts of a holy life and exhorts the faithful not to neglect the sacrament of extreme unction in sickness.

The oriental liturgy or mass, which bears the name of this apostle, is mentioned by Proclus, patriarch of Constantinople, and by the council in Trullo, and is of venerable antiquity. St. Basil, indeed, testifies, that the words of the sacred invocation in the consecration of the bread and of the cup, were not committed to writing, but learned and preserved by tradition down to the fourth century, which was done on a motive of respect and veneration: but other parts of the liturgy were written. Perhaps St. James gave only general directions about this liturgy, upon whose plan it was afterwards drawn up or enlarged. His singular learning in sacred matters is extolled by St. Clement of Alexandria, and St. Jerome.

The Jews, being exasperated at the disappointment of their malicious designs against St. Paul, by his appeal to Caesar, to whom he was sent by Festus, in the year 60, were resolved to revenge it on St. James. That governor, dying before the arrival of his successor, Albinus, this vacancy gave them an opportunity of acting more arbitrarily than otherwise they durst have done. Wherefore, during this interval, Ananus, the high-priest, son of the famous Annas mentioned in the gospels, having assembled the Sanhedrim, or great council of the Jews, summoned St. James and others before it. Josephus, the Jewish historian, says, that St. James was accused of violating the laws, and delivered to the people to be stoned to death. And Hegesippus adds, that they carried him up to the battlements of the temple and would have compelled him from thence to make a public renunciation of his faith in Christ, with this further view, thereby to undeceive, as they termed it, those among the people who had embraced Christianity. But St. James took that opportunity to declare his belief in Jesus Christ, after the most solemn and public manner. For he cried out aloud from the battlements, in the hearing of a great multitude, which was then at Jerusalem on account of the Passover, that Jesus, the Son of man, was seated at the right hand of the Sovereign Majesty and would come in the clouds of heaven to judge the world. The Scribes and Pharisees, enraged at this testimony in behalf of Jesus, cried out: "The just man also hath erred." And going up to the battlements, they threw him headlong down to the ground, saying, "He must be stoned." St. James, though very much bruised by his fall, had strength

enough to get upon his knees, and in this posture, lifting up his eyes to heaven, he begged of God to pardon his murderers, seeing that they knew not what they did. The rabble below received him with showers of stones, and at last a fuller gave him a blow on the head with his club, such as is used in dressing of cloths, after which he presently expired. This happened on the festival of the Pasch, the 10th of April, in the year of Christ 62, the seventh of Nero. He was buried near the temple, in the place in which he was martyred, where a small column was erected. Such was the reputation of his sanctity, that the Jews attributed to his death the destruction of Jerusalem, as we read in St. Jerome, Origen, and Eusebius, who assure us that Josephus himself declared it in the genuine editions of his history. Ananus put others to death for the same cause, but was threatened for this very fact by Albinus, and deposed from the high priesthood by Agrippa. The episcopal throne of St. James was shown with respect at Jerusalem, in the fourth century. His relics are said to have been brought to Constantinople about the year 572.

*Source: ewtn.com*