

May 26, 2023

Good Morning!

Novena to the Holy Spirit - Day Eight; Gift of Wisdom

Scammer alert! Remember Fr. Gillespie does not send emails asking you to reach out to him...no matter how sweet the language is in the email "Love and Light" Rev. Philip S. Gillespie, Pastor....***Always check the address of the person sending the email and if not a church email - do not respond!***

1. Today's Readings: [Memorial of Saint Philip Neri, Priest | USCCB](#)

2. The RE Corner with Jan Heithaus: St. Philip Neri has the reputation for being a joy filled yet humble saint. If you are interested in watching a video about him, see the link below at Formed.org. Not signed up yet? Register for free under our parish subscription.

3. Quotes of the Day: St. Philip Neri

~"Cheerfulness strengthens the heart and makes us persevere in a good life; wherefore, the servant of God ought always to be in good spirits."

~"Patience is necessary for the servant of God, and we must not be distressed at trouble, but wait for consolation."

~"We must not leave off our prayers because of distractions and restlessness of mind, although it seems useless to go on with them. He who perseveres for the whole of his accustomed time, gently recalling his mind to the subject of his prayer, merits greatly."

St. Philip Neri, Pray for Us!

St. Joseph, Pray for Us!

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NOVENA TO THE HOLY SPIRIT FOR THE SEVEN GIFTS

The novena in honor of the Holy Spirit is the oldest of all novenas. Our Lord Jesus sent His apostles back to Jerusalem to await the coming of the Holy Spirit on the first Pentecost. It is still the only novena officially prescribed by the Church. Addressed to the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity, it is a powerful plea for the light and strength and love so sorely needed by Christians.

HOW TO PRAY THE NOVENA

The particular prayer and meditation are said each day and followed by: **Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be 7x, Act of Consecration** and the **Prayer for the Seven Gifts**.

ACT OF CONSECRATION TO THE HOLY GHOST

On my knees before the great multitude of heavenly witnesses I offer myself, soul and body to You, Eternal Spirit of God. I adore the brightness of Your purity the unerring keenness of Your justice and the might of Your love. You are the Strength and Light of my soul. In You I live and move and am. I desire never to grieve You by unfaithfulness to grace and I pray with all my heart to be kept from the smallest sin against You. Mercifully guard my every thought and grant that I may always watch for Your light: and listen to Your voice and follow Your gracious inspirations. I cling to You and give myself to You and ask You by Your compassion to watch over me in my weakness. Holding the pierced Feet of Jesus and looking at His Five Wounds and trusting in His Precious Blood and adoring His opened Side and stricken Heart I implore You, Adorable Spirit, Helper of my infirmity, so to keep me in Your grace that I may never sin against You. Give me grace O Holy Spirit, Spirit of the Father and the Son to say to You always and everywhere "Speak Lord for Your servant is listening." Amen.

PRAYER FOR THE SEVEN GIFTS OF THE HOLY GHOST

O Lord Jesus Christ Who, before ascending into heaven did promise to send the Holy Spirit to finish Your work in the souls of Your Apostles and Disciples deign to grant the same Holy Spirit to me that He may perfect in my soul the work of Your grace and Your love. Grant me the Spirit of Wisdom that I may despise the perishable things of this world and aspire only after the things that are eternal; the Spirit of Understanding to enlighten my mind with the light of Your divine truth, the Spirit of Counsel that I may ever choose the surest way of pleasing God and gaining heaven, the Spirit of Fortitude; that I may bear my cross with You and that I may overcome with courage all the obstacles that oppose my salvation; the Spirit of Knowledge that I may know God, know myself, and grow perfect in the science of the Saints, the Spirit of Piety that I may find the service of God sweet and amiable, the Spirit of Fear that I may be filled with a loving reverence towards God and may dread in any way to displease Him. Mark me, dear Lord with the sign of Your true disciples / and animate me in all things with Your Spirit. Amen.



8th DAY OF THE NOVENA

*Bend the stubborn heart and will,
melt the frozen warm the chill.
Guide the steps that go astray!*

The Gift of Wisdom

Embodying all the other gifts, as charity embraces all the other virtues, Wisdom is the most perfect of the gifts. Of wisdom it is written "all good things came to me with her, and innumerable riches through her hands." It is the gift of Wisdom that strengthens our faith, fortifies hope, perfects charity, and promotes the practice of virtue in the highest degree. Wisdom enlightens the mind to discern and relish things divine, in the appreciation of which earthly joys lose their savor, whilst the Cross of Christ yields a divine sweetness according to the words of the Savior: "Take up thy cross and follow me, for my yoke is sweet and my burden light.

Prayer

Come, O Spirit of Wisdom, and reveal to my soul the mysteries of heavenly things, their exceeding greatness, power and beauty. Teach me to love them above and beyond all the passing joys and satisfactions of earth. Help me to attain them and possess them forever. Amen.

(Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be 7x, Act of Consecration, Prayer of Seven Gifts)

St Philip Neri

Catholic saints are human beings who lived extraordinary lives. If one had to choose a saint who showed the humorous side of holiness, it would be Philip Neri. On the other hand, he was a sign of contradiction, combining popularity with piety against the background of a corrupt Rome and an indifferent clergy, the main elements of post-Renaissance malaise.



An 1833 lithography depicting the episode when a donkey lost its footing and tumbled into a cellar with young Philip Neri winding up underneath the animal.

Born in Florence on July 22, 1515, Neri showed the impulsiveness and spontaneity of his character from the time he was a boy. One incident almost cost him his life. Seeing a donkey laden with fruit for market, the little boy had barely thought of jumping on the donkey's back before he did it. The surprised donkey lost its footing, and together with the fruit and boy tumbled into a cellar with Neri ending up beneath the animal.

Miraculously, he was unhurt. This incident of the eight-year-old Neri is dear to his early biographers as the first visible intervention of Providence on his behalf, and perhaps dearer still to his disciples, because it reveals the human characteristics of a boy amid the supernatural of a saint.

Neri was a man remarkable for the sweetness of his disposition, for his intense personal love of God and for his merriment. At an early age he left home to go to live in an attic in Rome in order to prepare himself for whatever work God wanted him to do.

At this period, religion was at a low ebb in the city. There were grave abuses in the Church, and educated men of the time had more use for classical literature than for Christian writing. Rome needed to be re-evangelized, and this was the life work of Neri, justly called 'the Apostle of Rome'.

He devoted himself entirely to the sanctification of his own soul and the good of his neighbor in a vocation unusual at the time. After dark he would go out in the streets, and most often into the catacombs of San Sebastiano to pray.



St Philip Neri's post-mortem mask venerated in the church of Our Lady of Porto Salvo in Senglea

In this catacomb, a few days before Pentecost in 1544, the well-known miracle of his heart took place: there appeared to him a globe of fire, which entered into his mouth and lodged in his breast. Placing his hand to his bosom, he felt by the side of his heart a swelling about as big as a man's fist, but neither then nor afterwards was it accompanied with the slightest pain or wound.

The cause of this swelling was discovered by doctors who examined his body after death. The saint's heart had been dilated under the sudden impulse of love, and in order that it might have sufficient room to move, two ribs had been curved in the form of an arch. From the time of the miracle till his death, his heart would palpitate violently whenever he performed any spiritual action.

Neri's appealing personality soon won him friends from all levels of society. In 1548, he formed the lay confraternity Santissima Trinità de' Pellegrini to minister to pilgrims who came to Rome without food or shelter. His private life was that of a hermit.

He started casual conversations at street corners, visited the sick, revived the ancient tradition of the visitations to the seven churches of Rome, which had fallen into neglect, and popularized devotion to the 40 hours prayer.

It was not till May 23, 1551, that he was ordained priest, following the advice of his spiritual director Don Persiano Rosa. From now on, much of his day was spent in the confessional of the church of San Girolamo della Carità.

Young men, to whom he recommended that they confess more often than they did, received from him the direction they needed to grow spiritually. Neri began to realize, though, that these young men needed something more than absolution; they needed guidance. So Neri began to ask the young men to pass by in the early afternoon to discuss spiritual readings and then stay for prayer.

He and his companions organized conferences in their oratory, and with the authorization of a papal bull dated July 15, 1575, they became officially known as

the Congregation of the Oratory, a community made up of secular priests and clerics. A feature of their life was a daily afternoon service of informal talks, with vernacular hymns and prayers. Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina was one of Neri's followers and composed music for the services.

Neri was known to be spontaneous and unpredictable, charming and humorous. Many people wrongly feel that such an attractive and jocular personality cannot be combined with an intense spirituality. Neri's life melted these rigid, narrow attitudes to piety. His approach to sanctity was truly Catholic, all-embracing and accompanied by a good laugh. He always wanted his followers to become not less, but more human through their striving for holiness.

Neri was known to be spontaneous and unpredictable, charming and humorous. Neri seemed to sense the different ways to bring people to God. He preferred spiritual mortification to physical mortification, which he himself did not avoid. Humility was the most important virtue he tried to teach others and to learn himself. Some of his lessons in humility seem cruel, but they were tinged with humor and were related with gratitude by the people they helped.

Even his own efforts to humble himself were humorous. There are stories of him wearing ridiculous clothes or walking around with half his beard shaved off. The greater his reputation for holiness the sillier he wanted to seem.

By order of the Pope, he set out to rebuild one of Rome's churches, which came to be known as the Chiesa Nuova, and it is in this church that he is buried. The Congregation of the Oratory which he founded was never very large, but among its sons was the great cardinal Blessed John Henry Newman.

Neri died on May 27, 1595, at the age of 80, worn out by his labors, consumed by his love of God and neighbor. Celebrated by many as one of the most cheerful of God's saints, he was beatified by Paul V in 1615, and canonized by Gregory XV in 1622.

Speaking of Neri, whom he called, "the saint of joy", St John Paul II said: "As is well known, the saint used to put his teaching into short and wise maxims: 'Be good, if you can'. He did not choose the life of solitude; but, in exercising his ministry among the common people, he also wished to be 'salt' for all those who met him. Like

Jesus, he was equally able to enter into the human misery present in the noble palaces and in the alleys of Renaissance Rome.” (October 7, 1994)

The Congregation of the Oratory of St Philip Neri is today a pontifical society of apostolic life of Catholic priests and lay brothers who live together in a community bound together by no formal vows. They are commonly referred to as Oratorians.

Source: timesofmalta.com