

*St. Philip the Apostle*  
Roman Catholic Church

**Friday, September 11, 2020**

-- Friday of the Twenty-Third Week in Ordinary Time

***Fr. Sherdel's Morning Mass Intention: Victims of the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001***

**First Reading: 1 Corinthians 9:16-19, 22-27**

Brothers and sisters: If I preach the Gospel, this is no reason for me to boast, for an obligation has been imposed on me, and woe to me if I do not preach it! If I do so willingly, I have a recompense, but if unwillingly, then I have been entrusted with a stewardship. What then is my recompense? That, when I preach, I offer the Gospel free of charge so as not to make full use of my right in the Gospel.

Although I am free in regard to all, I have made myself a slave to all so as to win over as many as possible. I have become all things to all, to save at least some. All this I do for the sake of the Gospel, so that I too may have a share in it.

Do you not know that the runners in the stadium all run in the race, but only one wins the prize? Run so as to win. Every athlete exercises discipline in every way. They do it to win a perishable crown, but we an imperishable one. Thus I do not run aimlessly; I do not fight as if I were shadowboxing. No, I drive my body and train it, for fear that, after having preached to others, I myself should be disqualified.

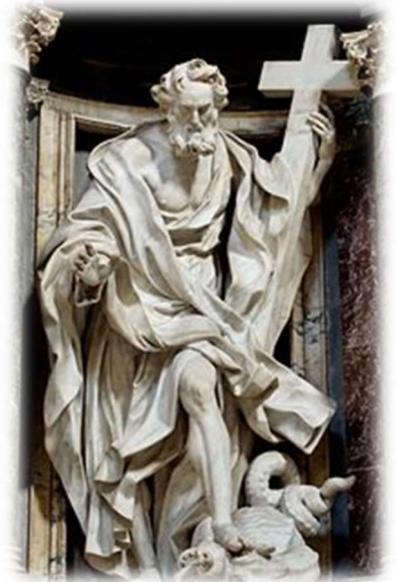
**Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 84:3, 4, 5-6, 12**

***How lovely is your dwelling place, Lord, mighty God!***

My soul yearns and pines  
for the courts of the Lord.  
My heart and my flesh  
cry out for the living God. *R/.*

Even the sparrow finds a home,  
and the swallow a nest  
in which she puts her young —  
Your altars, O Lord of hosts,  
my king and my God! *R/.*

Blessed they who dwell in your house!



continually they praise you.

Blessed the men whose strength you are!

their hearts are set upon the pilgrimage. *R/.*

For a sun and a shield is the Lord God;

grace and glory he bestows;

The Lord withholds no good thing

from those who walk in sincerity. *R/.*

### **Gospel: Luke 6:39-42**

Jesus told his disciples a parable: “Can a blind person guide a blind person? Will not both fall into a pit? No disciple is superior to the teacher; but when fully trained, every disciple will be like his teacher. Why do you notice the splinter in your brother’s eye, but do not perceive the wooden beam in your own? How can you say to your brother, ‘Brother, let me remove that splinter in your eye,’ when you do not even notice the wooden beam in your own eye? You hypocrite! Remove the wooden beam from your eye first; then you will see clearly to remove the splinter in your brother’s eye.”

### **Reflection**

*Remove the wooden beam from your eye. (Luke 6:42)*

It might not be obvious, but the seemingly unconnected verses in today’s Gospel are all related. They all have to do with examining our consciences and confessing our sin.

Jesus encourages us to remove the “beam” from our eye (Luke 6:42) so that we can be clear-eyed guides for the people around us (6:39). He wants us to pay attention to our own faults and weaknesses so that we can become disciples who have been “fully trained” and are like our Teacher himself (6:40).

Let’s face it, when we’re stuck in a pattern of sin, it is as if a wooden beam were blocking our vision. As long as we tolerate or excuse our sin, as long as we don’t seek out the grace of reconciliation, we are blinded. What’s more, we remain immature disciples, and we might even end up leading people away from Jesus by our poor example.

But all is not lost. God has given us the gift of self-examination and the Sacrament of Reconciliation. That’s how the sin that blocks our vision is removed. We begin to see the difference between sin and holiness more clearly. We begin to look at the people around us differently. We become less likely to notice their faults and more likely to see Christ in them. We become less likely to jump to judgmental thoughts about them and more likely to forgive them.

Beyond the forgiveness, examining our conscience and confessing our sin are vital in our training as disciples. We face up to the ways we fall short, and we receive the grace to overcome our shortcomings. Through the sacrament and the counsel of the priest, we begin to see things the way Jesus does and are released from the hold that sin has on us. As a result, we become better friends, better neighbors, and more true to our vocation. We are more able to love the people around us and to lead them, not into a pit, but to Jesus!

All this grace is available to you in Confession. So don’t hesitate to celebrate this healing and transforming sacrament. Let Jesus open your eyes and train you to be a mature disciple—one who looks more and more like the Teacher.

*Lord, open my eyes so that I can follow you and be an example to everyone who sees me.*

### **An Act of Spiritual Communion**

My Jesus,  
I believe that You  
are present in the Most Holy Sacrament  
I love You above all things,  
and I desire to receive You into my soul.  
Since I cannot at this moment  
receive You sacramentally,  
come at least spiritually into my heart.  
I embrace You as if You were already there  
and unite myself wholly to You.  
Never permit me to be separated from You.  
Amen.

### **Prayer to St. Michael the Archangel**

St. Michael the Archangel,  
defend us in battle.  
Be our defense against the wickedness and snares of the Devil.  
May God rebuke him, we humbly pray,  
and do thou,  
O Prince of the heavenly hosts,  
by the power of God,  
thrust into hell Satan,  
and all the evil spirits,  
who prowl about the world  
seeking the ruin of souls.  
Amen.