

St. Philip the Apostle
Roman Catholic Church



Friday, November 20, 2020

-- Saturday of the Thirty-Third Week in Ordinary Time

First Reading: Revelation 11:4-12

I, John, heard a voice from heaven speak to me: Here are my two witnesses: These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth. If anyone wants to harm them, fire comes out of their mouths and devours their enemies. In this way, anyone wanting to harm them is sure to be slain. They have the power to close up the sky so that no rain can fall during the time of their prophesying. They also have power to turn water into blood and to afflict the earth with any plague as often as they wish.

When they have finished their testimony, the beast that comes up from the abyss will wage war against them and conquer them and kill them. Their corpses will lie in the main street of the great city, which has the symbolic names "Sodom" and "Egypt," where indeed their Lord was crucified. Those from every people, tribe, tongue, and nation will gaze on their corpses for three and a half days, and they will not allow their corpses to be buried. The inhabitants of the earth will gloat over them and be glad and exchange gifts because these two prophets tormented the inhabitants of the earth. But after the three and a half days, a breath of life from God entered them. When they stood on their feet, great fear fell on those who saw them. Then they heard a loud voice from heaven say to them, "Come up here." So they went up to heaven in a cloud as their enemies looked on.

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 144:1, 2, 9-10

Blessed be the Lord, my Rock!

Blessed be the Lord, my rock,
who trains my hands for battle, my fingers for war. *R/.*

My mercy and my fortress,
my stronghold, my deliverer,
My shield, in whom I trust,
who subdues my people under me. *R/.*

O God, I will sing a new song to you;
with a ten stringed lyre I will chant your praise,
You who give victory to kings,
and deliver David, your servant from the evil sword. *R/.*

Gospel: Luke 20:27-40

Some Sadducees, those who deny that there is a resurrection, came forward and put this question to Jesus, saying, "Teacher, Moses wrote for us, *If someone's brother dies leaving a wife but no child, his brother must take the wife and raise up descendants for his brother.* Now there were seven brothers; the first married a woman but died childless. Then the second and the third married her, and likewise all the seven died childless. Finally the woman also died. Now at the resurrection whose wife will that woman be? For all seven had been married to her." Jesus said to them, "The children of this age marry and remarry; but those who are deemed worthy to attain to the coming age and to the resurrection of the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage. They can no longer die, for they are like angels; and they are the children of God because they are the ones who will rise. That the dead will rise even Moses made known in the passage about the bush, when he called 'Lord' the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; and he is not God of the dead, but of the living, for to him all are alive." Some of the scribes said in reply, "Teacher, you have answered well." And they no longer dared to ask him anything.

Reflection

He is not God of the dead, but of the living. (Luke 20:38)

The Sadducees in today's Gospel present Jesus with a tragic but unlikely situation. A woman marries and is widowed seven times, and her husbands were all brothers. She leaves no children behind. In heaven, they ask, "Whose wife will that woman be?" (Luke 20:33).

The Sadducees weren't really interested in this theoretical woman and her marriages. They were only trying to trip Jesus up. Yet they raised an interesting question, and Jesus gave them an interesting answer. People in heaven will not be married, at least not in the sense we understand on earth.

Have you ever wondered what it will be like being in heaven with your family members? We all know people who have been divorced or widowed and then remarried. What will their relationship with their ex-spouses and stepchildren be like in heaven? Even those who go through life with only one spouse, or who have never been married, may still have worry about unresolved family strife.

The good news is that we won't have conflicts in heaven. There, Scripture tells us, God "will wipe every tear," and "there shall be no more death or mourning, wailing or pain" (Revelation 21:4). We won't suffer or be weighed down by the sins that result in so many of our difficulties. There may be more than one spouse waiting for us in heaven or maybe a sibling we didn't get along with. It may be hard to imagine these relationships without all the problems, complications, or bad feelings, but that's how it will be. And we will love it!

As we go through our days trying to bring peace to our households, neighborhoods, and workplaces, it's comforting to remember that someday our relationships will be healed and perfected. In fact, these struggles can bring us closer to God and prepare us for the life to come!

So take comfort from Jesus' words today. He is the "God of the living." That means he can bring new life and hope to all your relationships now. It also means that he is eager to welcome you into heaven with a love far beyond anything you have experienced here on earth!

Jesus, help me to keep my eyes on heaven, my true home.

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.