

St. Philip the Apostle
Roman Catholic Church

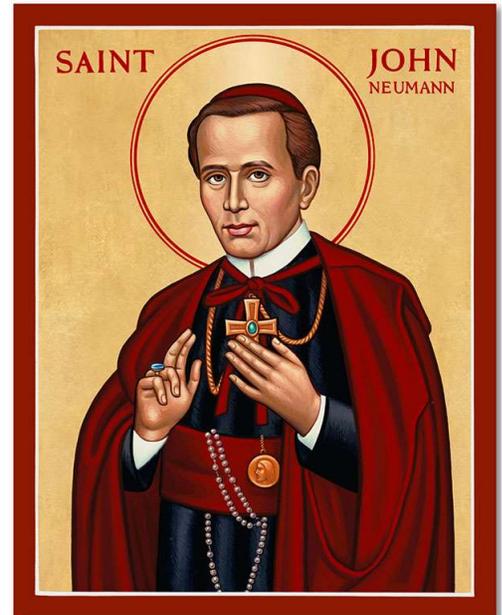
Tuesday, January 5, 2021

-- Memorial of St. John Neumann, Bishop

-- Fr. Sherdel's Morning Mass Intention: ***Teresa Bucko***

First Reading: 1 John 4:7-10

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is of God; everyone who loves is begotten by God and knows God. Whoever is without love does not know God, for God is love. In this way the love of God was revealed to us: God sent his only-begotten Son into the world so that we might have life through him. In this is love: not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as expiation for our sins.



Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 72:1-2, 3-4, 7-8

Lord, every nation on earth will adore you.

O God, with your judgment endow the king,
and with your justice, the king's son;
He shall govern your people with justice
and your afflicted ones with judgment. ***R/.***

The mountains shall yield peace for the people,
and the hills justice.
He shall defend the afflicted among the people,
save the children of the poor. ***R/.***

Justice shall flower in his days,
and profound peace, till the moon be no more.
May he rule from sea to sea,
and from the River to the ends of the earth. ***R/.***

Gospel: Mark 6:34-44

When Jesus saw the vast crowd, his heart was moved with pity for them, for they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things. By now it was already late and his disciples approached him and said, "This is a deserted place and it is already very late. Dismiss them so that they can go to the surrounding farms and villages and buy themselves something to eat." He said to them in reply, "Give them some food yourselves." But they said to him, "Are we to buy two hundred days' wages worth of food and give it to them to eat?" He asked

them, “How many loaves do you have? Go and see.” And when they had found out they said, “Five loaves and two fish.” So he gave orders to have them sit down in groups on the green grass. The people took their places in rows by hundreds and by fifties. Then, taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he said the blessing, broke the loaves, and gave them to his disciples to set before the people; he also divided the two fish among them all. They all ate and were satisfied. And they picked up twelve wicker baskets full of fragments and what was left of the fish. Those who ate of the loaves were five thousand men.

Reflection

Let us love one another. (1 John 4:7)

Picture a comic strip in which Mom and Dad go out for the evening and leave their oldest child in charge of the younger ones. As they walk out the door, the kids smile pleasantly and wave good-bye. But the minute the door closes, the children start fighting with each other and tearing the house apart.

We could compare the children in this image to members of the early Church whom John was addressing — and maybe even to us as members of the Church today. Jesus had left his apostles only a few decades earlier, but already they were plagued by discord and division.

John wrote to the Christian community because he wanted them to restore and deepen their fellowship with God and with one another. To foster this unity, he reminded them of two things that can also help us today.

First, John told them that God’s redeeming love for us springs from his own initiative, not ours. His love for us is not based on whether we are right or wrong. It’s not based on how hard we have worked to build his kingdom. It’s just who he is — love!

Second, God loves that other person with whom we have major disagreements just as deeply as he loves us. If we stay rooted in this assurance every day, we will find it easier to love the people who upset us. We will find the strength and humility we need to forgive one another and to work together for the good of the Church.

The next time you encounter a Christian who doesn’t think like you or who doesn’t seem very loving, remember this truth: “Love is of God” (1 John 4:7). It does not come to us as a result of our human perfection. It does not come only to those who are likeminded. And it certainly does not come in just half measures to the weak, the sinful, or the unbelieving.

Can you respond to your “enemies” in a way that reflects God’s love? It’s not easy, but every effort you make to do this — and every prayer you lift up asking for God’s grace to help you—is a powerful sign that God’s love has taken root in you.

Lord, let my love for my brothers and sisters shine as a witness to you.

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.