

St. Philip the Apostle

Roman Catholic Church



Monday, September 5, 2022

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

-- Labor Day

First Reading: 1 Corinthians 5:1-8

Brothers and sisters: It is widely reported that there is immorality among you, and immorality of a kind not found even among pagans – a man living with his father's wife. And you are inflated with pride. Should you not rather have been sorrowful? The one who did this deed should be expelled from your midst. I, for my part, although absent in body but present in spirit, have already, as if present, pronounced judgment on the one who has committed this deed, in the name of our Lord Jesus: when you have gathered together and I am with you in spirit with the power of the Lord Jesus, you are to deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of his flesh, so that his spirit may be saved on the day of the Lord.

Your boasting is not appropriate. Do you not know that a little yeast leavens all the dough? Clear out the old yeast, so that you may become a fresh batch of dough, inasmuch as you are unleavened. For our Paschal Lamb, Christ, has been sacrificed. Therefore, let us celebrate the feast, not with the old yeast, the yeast of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 5:5-6, 7, 12

Lead me in your justice, Lord.

For you, O God, delight not in wickedness;
no evil man remains with you;
the arrogant may not stand in your sight.

You hate all evildoers. ***R/.***

You destroy all who speak falsehood;
The bloodthirsty and the deceitful
the Lord abhors. ***R/.***

But let all who take refuge in you
be glad and exult forever.

Protect them, that you may be the joy
of those who love your name. ***R/.***

Gospel: Luke 6:6-11

On a certain sabbath Jesus went into the synagogue and taught, and there was a man there whose right hand was withered. The scribes and the Pharisees watched him closely to see if he would cure on the sabbath so that they might discover a reason to accuse him. But he realized their intentions

and said to the man with the withered hand, "Come up and stand before us." And he rose and stood there. Then Jesus said to them, "I ask you, is it lawful to do good on the sabbath rather than to do evil, to save life rather than to destroy it?" Looking around at them all, he then said to him, "Stretch out your hand." He did so and his hand was restored. But they became enraged and discussed together what they might do to Jesus.

Reflection

Clear out the old yeast. (1 Corinthians 5:7)

Yeast is a key ingredient in bread making, but you don't need much — maybe only a teaspoon or two — to make a batch of dough. That's because yeast is a microorganism that multiplies quickly, giving off carbon dioxide, which leavens the bread.

In today's first reading, St. Paul uses the analogy of yeast to describe sin. He is warning the Corinthians that if they tolerate sin among their members — like the incest that Paul refers to in this passage — they risk infecting the entire community. And so he tells them to clear out the "old yeast" of sin so that they can become the "unleavened bread" of holiness (1 Corinthians 5:7, 8).

St. Paul was addressing a community of believers, but this same principle applies to each of us individually. When we tolerate sin, even a seemingly minor one, it has the potential to be like yeast. We can allow the sin to become so deep-rooted or habitual that it becomes very difficult to walk away from it. It's also true that if we tolerate one kind of sin in our life, then tolerating another becomes easier to do.

In such situations, we might say to ourselves, "I've tried, but I just can't kick this." Or "I'm just weak in this area." Or "It's not a big deal; everyone does it." But when we let down our defenses, we open ourselves to even more temptation and sin.

So what's the remedy? St. Paul tells us, "Our Paschal Lamb, Christ, has been sacrificed" (1 Corinthians 5:7). On the cross Jesus defeated sin and death. He wants us to live in freedom, and so he forgives us every time we come to him, even if we keep confessing the same sins over and over again. He also gives us all the grace we need to overcome every sin in our lives. We just need to keep asking for it.

We all know how difficult it can be to break free from sin. Sometimes it takes years, or even a lifetime. But don't give up! Keep working to clear out the old yeast so that you can become the unleavened bread that God has called you to be.

Jesus, I want to be pure, unleavened bread for you. Help me to root out the sin in my life.

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.