

St. Philip the Apostle

Roman Catholic Church

Saturday, September 24, 2022

-- Saturday of the Twenty-Fifth Week in Ordinary Time

First Reading: Ecclesiastes 11:9—12:8

Rejoice, O young man, while you are young and let your heart be glad in the days of your youth. Follow the ways of your heart, the vision of your eyes; Yet understand that as regards all this God will bring you to judgment. Ward off grief from your heart and put away trouble from your presence, though the dawn of youth is fleeting.

Remember your Creator in the days of your youth, before the evil days come And the years approach of which you will say, I have no pleasure in them; Before the sun is darkened, and the light, and the moon, and the stars, while the clouds return after the rain; When the guardians of the house tremble, and the strong men are bent, And the grinders are idle because they are few, and they who look through the windows grow blind; When the doors to the street are shut, and the sound of the mill is low; When one waits for the chirp of a bird, but all the daughters of song are suppressed; And one fears heights, and perils in the street; When the almond tree blooms, and the locust grows sluggish and the caper berry is without effect, Because man goes to his lasting home, and mourners go about the streets; Before the silver cord is snapped and the golden bowl is broken, And the pitcher is shattered at the spring, and the broken pulley falls into the well, And the dust returns to the earth as it once was, and the life breath returns to God who gave it.

Vanity of vanities, says Qoheleth, all things are vanity!

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 90:3-4, 5-6, 12-13, 14, 17

In every age, O Lord, you have been our refuge.

You turn man back to dust,
saying, "Return, O children of men."

For a thousand years in your sight
are as yesterday, now that it is past,
or as a watch of the night. ***R/.***

You make an end of them in their sleep;
the next morning they are like the changing grass,
Which at dawn springs up anew,
but by evening wilts and fades. ***R/.***

Teach us to number our days aright,
that we may gain wisdom of heart.

Return, O Lord! How long?

Have pity on your servants! ***R/.***



Fill us at daybreak with your kindness,
that we may shout for joy and gladness all our days.
And may the gracious care of the Lord our God be ours;
prosper the work of our hands for us!
Prosper the work of our hands! *R/.*

In every age, O Lord, you have been our refuge.

Gospel: Luke 9:43-45

While they were all amazed at his every deed, Jesus said to his disciples, "Pay attention to what I am telling you. The Son of Man is to be handed over to men." But they did not understand this saying; its meaning was hidden from them so that they should not understand it, and they were afraid to ask him about this saying.

Reflection

. . . before the evil days come. (Ecclesiastes 12:1)

Qoheleth, the author of the Book of Ecclesiastes, would probably have appreciated these verses from the seventeenth-century poet Robert Herrick:

Gather ye rosebuds while ye may, Old Time is still a-flying; And this same flower that smiles today Tomorrow will be dying.

Qoheleth urged his readers to do the same thing that Herrick counseled: "Let your heart be glad in the days of your youth" (Ecclesiastes 11:9). Why? Because "the evil days" of old age are coming. Soon enough the time will come when you will take "no pleasure" in life, so you might as well enjoy your youth while you can (12:1)!

We might wonder why this passage is in the Bible. It doesn't sound very inspiring! But perhaps that's the point. Qoheleth had the courage to describe life as he saw it — life before the coming of Christ, that is. Because we're here one day and gone the next, Qoheleth saw life as a "vanity of vanities" (Ecclesiastes 12:8).

Contrast this vision to the life that Jesus proclaimed. Where Qoheleth saw darkness and death, Jesus showed that the promise of eternal life in heaven overcomes the darkness. Where Qoheleth saw a life of temporary pleasure that gives way to the futility of death, Jesus proclaimed a message of true, deep-down joy that comes from a living, eternal relationship with his Father. Where Qoheleth told young people to eat, drink, and be merry because that's all there is, Jesus urged us to live for heaven and the joy that awaits us there.

Today is a good day to ask Jesus to share with you his vision of life. Let his promise of resurrection lift you up from the vanities of life. Let his presence — right here, right now — fill you with joy and sustain you through the hard times. Always remember that you belong to Christ. You were made for eternity!

Jesus, you are my resurrection! You are 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.