

# **MORNING MEDITATION**

**Friday, Seventh Week of Easter**

**God will not always accuse us, nor will he keep his anger forever  
because he is steadfast love.**

(Psalm 103)

## **Acts 25:13-21**

The authorities were confused over Paul's arrest and the accusation brought against him. This arrest and imprisonment brought much good. Paul used this opportunity to proclaim the resurrection of Jesus. Many Roman officials including the king came to know about the resurrection of Jesus.

**People of faith, like Paul, discover grace and strength even in disappointing and difficult experiences.**

## **Psalm 103**

**Bless the Lord O my soul;  
and all my being, bless his holy name.  
Bless the Lord O my soul,  
And forget not all his benefits.**

## **John 21:15-19**

**"Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these..."** "More than these..." It just may be that Jesus swept his hand around the boat, the net, the fishes, etc. and asked Peter, "do you love me more than these..." Are you prepared to give them all up, to abandon all hope of a successful career, to give up a steady job, to give up your people...and work with me?...a challenge to Peter for a final decision!

**What does it mean to you, in terms of your own personal life, at this point in time?  
What do you feel challenged to do today?**

It may be that Jesus looked at the rest of the group and asked Peter: "do you love me more than these?" Remember Peter saying, "though they all fall away, I will never..." (Mt.26:33). Now, Peter has to remember how he thought he alone could be faithful and how his courage eventually failed, and he denied his master three times.

**What does this say to you, personally?**

If Peter denied three times, now he affirms three times. How gracious! Three new

opportunities for affirmation, for loyalty after threefold denial! Threefold affirmation of Love! This declaration of Love brought Peter great responsibility.

**Reflect on this experience of Peter.**

### **Saint of the Day, May 26 - St. Philip Neri and 19 other saints are remembered this day.**

Philip was born into a noble family in Florence, Italy, on July 21, 1515. He received his early education from the friars at San Marco, the famous Dominican monastery in Florence.

At the age of 18, Philip was sent to his uncle, Romolo, a wealthy merchant at San Germano to assist him in his business, and with the hope that he might inherit his uncle's fortune. He gained Romolo's confidence and affection, but soon after coming to San Germano Philip had a religious conversion. From then onward, he no longer cared for things of the world, and decided to live in Rome and began to talk to people on the streets about Jesus. For thirteen years Philip ministered on the streets and had a following of many, including the rich and the poor. So great was his ministry that he formed a group of laypersons that would meet for prayer, faith sharing, and service.

Philip had studied philosophy and theology for three years, but he had given up the idea of being a priest. However, at the urging of his confessor, he was ordained in 1551. Some of his followers also became priests, and they lived together in community. This was the beginning of the Oratory, the religious institute he founded. The Oratory was finally approved after suffering through a period of accusations of being an assembly of heretics, where laypersons preached and sang vernacular hymns!

As a priest, Philip was an outstanding confessor, and his advice was sought by many, including royalty and the clergy. He was influential in converting many of the influential people within the Church itself to personal holiness. Philip's advice was sought by many of the prominent figures of his day. He is one of the influential figures of the Counter-Reformation, mainly for converting to personal holiness many of the influential people within the Church itself.

Philip Neri died on May 25, 1595, the Feast of Corpus Christi that year, after having spent the day hearing confessions and receiving visitors. He was canonized by Pope Gregory XV in 1622

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