

Reflection for Tuesday 7th Week of Easter – St Philip Neri

St Philip Neri 1515 – 1595 is known as the *Second Apostle of Rome* after Saint Peter. He was an Italian priest who founded the Congregation of the Oratory. St John Henry Newman brought the Oratorians to England in the 18th Century. St Philip founded schools for very poor young people in Rome but sought to work with both rich and poor together. He was famous for his sense of humour and his ability to make fun of himself, especially if anyone thought too highly of him. Philip Neri, Paul and Jesus, all very different, yet all fulfilled what the Father asked of them in very different ways. We, too, are asked to fulfil the Father's will, each in our own way. Some of us may well do better than others but we can all try our best and that is all God asks of us. Paul could not be clearer about his purpose and what he achieved in fulfilling the will of God. Unlike St Paul, we have a habit of dwelling on our failures and rarely reflect on what we have allowed God to achieve through us. Jesus does not dwell on his failures but makes it clear he has fulfilled his Father's will. Yet, he could have said he was unable to cure people in his own town because of their disbelief. That he certainly was unable to change the minds of the Jewish leaders. He was also unable to help Judas Iscariot see the light or prevent him from taking his own life. Philip Neri saw all his successes and achievements as the work of God but equally saw himself as a redeemed sinner like everyone else. He was neither better nor worse than anyone else. **We now live** in an age where *Normal* is questioned at every turn and rightly so. This means that we no longer need to measure ourselves against what others have or have not achieved. We are truly unique because God made each of us unique. In being unique we can better see the distinctiveness of each person we encounter in life. This is what the apostles and disciples discovered at Pentecost that they were not only unique in the eyes of God but that Jesus was confident enough to say that they would achieve even greater things than he had done. Today, Philip Neri reminds us what this belief in his ability to fulfil the Father's will allowed God to achieve in him. With the Spirit, we can prove Jesus' belief and trust in us to be worthwhile. And, if you are ever having a hard time pray this prayer of Philip Neri: *Let me get through today, and I shall not fear tomorrow.*

And now for a bit of humour I think!:

*An FBI agent is interviewing a bank teller after the bank had been robbed 3 times by the same bandit. "Did you notice anything special about the man?" asks the agent. "Yes," replies the teller. **"He was better dressed each time."***

What do you get if you cross a Cocker Spaniel with a Poodle and a rooster?

A cocka-poodle-doo!

*A neutron walks into a restaurant and orders a soda. After finishing the drink, the neutron asks the waiter, "How much?" The waiter replies, **"For you, no charge."***

I went to the doctors the other day and said: "Have you got anything for wind?"
He gave me a kite.