

FAITH FUNDAMENTALS

Helping Catholics to Learn, Live, and Love their Faith.

MAY 2025 SUPPLEMENT

Saint of the Month



St. Philip Neri (Feastday, May 26) – St.

Philip Neri (1515-1595) is one of the Church's most joyful saints. He was born in Florence but was called the Apostle of Rome because his entire priesthood was spent in Rome during a time of crisis where he led many reforms of clergy and laity alike.

His motto was "A joyful heart is more easily made perfect than a downcast one." He lived that way with a playful sense of humor and wit. His famous pilgrimages throughout Rome included music and family picnicking to evangelize souls.

He often went into ecstasies during his celebration of Mass, and sometimes his Masses lasted over two hours. St. Phillip founded the Congregation of the Oratory and died on the Feast of the Sacred Heart in 1595.



Back to Basics

HERE AND NOW – It is not only on All Souls Day that the Church prays for souls. Members of the Church are obliged to be concerned about the salvation of souls in the *here and now*, every day of the year! We do this in four ways:

Care: This term refers to the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy. Catholics believe in the fundamental dignity of the human person. Our concern is not just for their bodily wellbeing but also for the salvation of their souls.

Prayer: Catholics believe that God "wills everyone to be saved and to come to knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim 2:4), so we pray for the salvation of every single soul on the face of the earth.

Prepare: The reason why the Catholic Church has always been in the business of education is that we believe it is necessary to teach people to live morally good lives here on earth as a preparation for the life of heaven.

Share: Jesus Himself told us to "make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you" (Mt 28:18-20). This mandate forms the basis of the Church's missionary efforts to bring the Gospel to the ends of the earth.

Let us remember that the Heart of Jesus has called us not only for our own sanctification, but also for that of other souls. He wants to be helped in the salvation of souls.

~ St. Padre Pio of Pietrelcina



Catechism Connection

SALUS ANIMARUM – The book of ecclesiastical rules and laws that we call the *Code of Canon Law* has the most extraordinary ending. Of the 1,752 canons (short paragraphs) that make up the book, the last one puts the whole purpose of the Church's law in perspective:

The salvation of souls, which must always be the supreme law in the Church, is to be kept before one's eyes. (Canon 1752)

This one sentence caps the whole legal code and assures that no one can accuse the Church of being legalistic like the Pharisees. The Latin term for "salvation of souls" is *salus animarum*, and great saints like Philip Neri modeled their lives and ministries on what could be called the basic "mission statement" of the Church.

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