

Tuesday 26 May

Today is Tuesday the 26 May, the Feast of St Philip Neri, in the 7th week of Easter.

The St Thomas Music Group sing the Prayer of St Theresa by Margaret Rizza. Let nothing disturb you, nothing distress you. While all things fade away, God is unchanging. Be patient, for with God in your heart, nothing is lacking. God is enough. As I enter into this time of prayer, I relax my body, quieten my mind and focus on my breathing.

Today's reading is from the Gospel of John.

After Jesus had spoken these words, he looked up to heaven and said, 'Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify you, since you have given him authority over all people, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. I glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do. So now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had in your presence before the world existed.

I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one'. John 17:1-11

Jesus' words are part of his farewell speech before he set out for Gethsemane to begin his passion. The disciples are sad. Jesus is going away. Their lives are about to change dramatically. In the course of the current pandemic, we have all had to adjust and make changes in our daily lives. How has that been for you?

Focus in these moments on one small phrase in this reading: "I am asking on their behalf..." Stay with this phrase. Reflect on it. Savour it. Jesus is praying for them. He is praying for his friends, those who belong to him, who are closest to him.

Now reflect - Jesus is asking on my behalf. Jesus is praying for me! He asks the Father to protect me. This might seem rather strange because we think it is right that we pray to Jesus. But Jesus prays for you, for me, for each one of us.

How are you today? Perhaps you have heard or listened to people saying goodbye to loved ones during this pandemic. Perhaps you have had to say goodbye yourself. How hard it can be to say goodbye when the hour has come. Listen again to Jesus' words.

St. Philip Neri, whose feast we celebrate today, is quoted as praying "Let me get through today, and I shall not fear tomorrow." Can I make that prayer my own, knowing that the Lord is praying for me and that I am surrounded by the protection that Jesus prayed for. Spend a few

moments sitting quietly with this awareness.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.