

THE ORATORY OF SAINT PHILIP NERI – TORONTO

Mark your calendars:

- **Sunday, May 9, after 12:30 p.m. Mass:** Marian Procession
- **Wednesday, May 12, at 7:30 p.m.:** Evening at the Oratory: ‘Turning towards the Lord: Orientation in Liturgical Prayer’
- **Saturday, May 15, at 10:00 a.m.:** Saint Philip’s Seminary Graduation Mass
- **Tuesday, May 25, at 7:30 p.m.:** First Vespers and Benediction for the Solemnity of St Philip Neri
- **Wednesday, May 26, at 6:00 p.m.:** Sung Latin Mass in honour of Saint Philip Neri
- **Saturday, June 5, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.:** Family Day of Recollection
- **Friday, June 18, at 5:30 p.m.:** Sung Mass of the Sacred Heart
- **Tuesday, June 29, at 5:30 p.m.:** Sung Mass in honour of Saints Peter and Paul
- **July 5-9:** Summer School – Session I
- **July 12-16:** Summer School – Session II
- **Monday, August 30, at 5:30 p.m.:** Sung Mass of Blessed Juvenal Ancina of the Oratory (This year is the 400th anniversary of his death.)

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Dear Friends of the Toronto Oratory:

On behalf of all the Fathers and Brothers of the Oratory, I wish you a blessed and grace-filled Easter. *Surrexit Dominus vere, alleluia!*

You are used to receiving a Newsletter in the fall, which, for the most part, tells you about events that have already taken place. Writing at this time gives me a chance to tell you about upcoming activities and to invite you to come to some or all of them. But let me begin by sharing some good news with you.

Vocations to the Oratory

On Sunday, February 22, Br Neil Maunder was clothed in the habit of Saint Philip. The name might be familiar to you, because Br Neil had been with us from 1998 to 2002. We are happy that he is now back with us and we hope and pray – and are confident – that he will stay with us for good. There are also two other men who have indicated that they intend to join before the fall, and there is at least one other serious possibility. We ask your prayers for these men and that God will send more to work out their salvation as sons of Saint Philip.

Library

Many of you have contributed to the construction of our new library. The building is now completely finished and the books are in their new locations. We are thrilled with the room, which can be seen on our web site, and we are grateful to our generous benefactors for making this project possible. We hope that the landscaping around the building will soon be finished.

And we look forward to making over the old library rooms into much-needed parlours for spiritual direction.

Holy Family Church

This year we acquired a set of Stations of the Cross that had previously been in a convent in the south of England. They are in excellent condition and the size and the colour are perfect for the new church. Many parishioners are pleased that the figures and poses are nearly identical to the Stations in the old church. The 'new' Stations were blessed on the first Saturday of Lent, during the Family Day of Recollection. We are very grateful to the anonymous benefactor who made this purchase possible.

We are also eagerly awaiting the installation of a bas-relief of the Holy Family for the front of the church. The piece is ready to be installed and in fact has already survived one winter in our courtyard outside the sacristy. As soon as it is finally in place, we plan to make a postcard of the front of the church. And the picture will be posted on our web site.

The Passion of the Christ

The Young Adults Group at the Oratory organized an outing for all parishioners to see Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ*. About 150 people attended. We were then very fortunate to have Claudia Brown give a lecture on the movie from an art historian's point of view at Ryerson, where she is the executive director of the Chaplaincy, and at Holy Family Parish. She convincingly showed that Gibson was drawing on a long tradition of Catholic art to achieve a powerful portrayal of the Passion and Death of Christ. We hope that this marvelous presentation will not remain hidden in Mrs Brown's computer and we will do our best to persuade her to make it available in some format in the future.

Marian Procession – May 9

We celebrate mother's day by having a procession in honour of our Lady. Each year, the line of people praying the Rosary and singing Marian hymns stretches farther around the block. This year, the procession is on Sunday, May 9, and starts right after the end of the 12:30 p.m. Mass at Holy Family.

Evenings at the Oratory

In the fall of 2002, we tried a new adaptation of Saint Philip's secular (or little) Oratory, which we have been calling 'Evenings at the Oratory'. On the second Wednesday of every month (except June, July, and August), at 7:30 p.m., we present an hour-long talk on a topic of interest to Catholics, aimed at educated adults (both men and women). Refreshments follow with an opportunity for people to meet one another and to talk to the Fathers and Brothers on an informal basis. Then at 9:00 p.m. we sing Compline (night prayer) in the church, accompanied by organ music. Our web site has the titles of all the talks that have been given so far and also of future talks. There is one more presentation before the summer break this year. On Wednesday, May 12, Br Michael Lang, a deacon from the London Oratory, will talk about his forthcoming book, *Turning towards the Lord: Orientation in Liturgical Prayer*.

St Philip's Day – May 25 / 26

We celebrate the feast day of our founder Saint Philip Neri as a solemnity. There will be solemn first Vespers and Benediction on Tuesday, May 25, at

7:30 p.m., and then a sung Latin Mass on Wednesday, May 26, at 6:00 p.m. We are fortunate to have as our guest preacher, Fr Romanus Cessario, a Dominican priest, who is known for his excellent work in moral theology.

In the past, we used to invite some of our benefactors to a garden party. This year, we have decided instead to invite everyone to pray with us before the Mass. The Blessed Sacrament will be exposed on Wednesday, May 26, from noon until 5:30 p.m. All the Fathers and Brothers will be in the church from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. We have also decided to pray a public Novena to Saint Philip. The Novena will start at 5:25 p.m. (just before the 5:30 p.m. Mass) on weekdays, beginning on Tuesday, May 18. On Saturday, May 22, the Novena will be at 4:55 p.m. (just before the 5:00 p.m. Mass), and on Sunday, May 23, the prayer will be recited during Vespers and Benediction.

We hope that many people will join us as we honour our Holy Founder.

Family Days of Recollection

If the criterion of success is the number of people attending, then the Family Days of Recollection are our most successful apostolate. But there is always room for more, especially at the newly reintroduced day of recollection on the first Saturday in June (5 June 2004). Please let us know if you are planning to come.

Oratory Summer School of Theology

The first session (July 5 - 9) of our summer school will be, as usual, an introduction to the *Catechism of the*

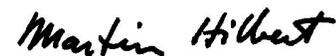
Catholic Church. The topic for the second session (July 12 – 16) will be ‘The Oratory of Saint Philip Neri’. This year marks the 25th anniversary of the Oratory’s arrival at Holy Family Church (6 September 1979), so we thought that this is a good opportunity to explain the Oratory. There will be lectures on Saint Philip and the other Oratorians raised to the altar, on Cardinal Newman and Father Faber, and more. An application form is included with this newsletter. And you can always find another one on the web.

Fr Robinson

Fr Robinson continues to be well. He takes his turn saying Mass and hearing confessions, and devotes much energy to the formation of our novices and to writing. His *Spiritual Combat Revisited*, which was published last year by Ignatius Press, is selling well. His *On the Lord’s Appearing* (CUA Press, 1997) has recently been published in a German translation. We are praying that his latest work will also see the light of day, and ask you to keep this intention in your prayers.

I hope that we will see many of you at the Oratory in the not too distant future. Pray that our house be a faithful reflection of Saint Philip’s apostolate.

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Fr Martin Hilbert