

CALL TO WORSHIP FOR SAINT PHILIPPINE DUCHESNE

Philippine Duchesne was the first Religious of the Sacred Heart to come to the United States in 1818. It is because of her that we students are privileged to be children of the Sacred Heart.

Her biographers emphasize two important characteristics of Philippine: her deep prayer life and her response to others in justice and love. These are at the heart of her spirit. Although cultural conditions in our country have changed radically, and the education offered us today differs substantially from that offered in the 1870s and 80's, Philippine's spirit is a constant and is able to inspire and encourage us. The following reading from Life at the Sacred Heart comments on these special qualities of Philippine to us:

Prayer is essential to our lives,  
We come to know God through scripture,  
through worship,  
in our classes,  
in our service to others.  
We discover ways to pray through a variety of prayer experiences.  
We learn to listen to the Word of God spoken in our lives and through the ideals of our education,  
and thus are led to "walk humbly with our God. II

Centered in God,  
our response will be to  
act in justice and love.  
Genuine love always takes the form of service.  
In a world plagued by injustice,  
torn by violence and fear,  
we must stand by the most wounded and needy.  
Here at our school  
we learn to take little steps and big steps  
in order to set God's kingdom right.  
Sacred Heart education aspires to make us  
open-eyed,  
alert to the needs of others,  
generous and courageous in service.

Love of God and love of neighbor is the message of Jesus, and the vision of Blessed Philippine Duchesne. Let us pray to Philippine today that she help us make real in our lives her spirit of prayer and of generosity.

LITURGY FOR THE  
FEAST OF PHILIPPINE DUCHESNE

Philippine is known to us today because she was a Religious of the Sacred Heart who brought our Order and education to America in 1818. But, she is

also known to many more people because of her contributions. If anyone has been to the Jefferson memorial in St. Louis, you will find her name inscribed on the Pioneer Roll of Fame. In the 1820s there was no private schooling for catholic girls west of the Mississippi, and there were no "free" schools of any kind. When she began our schools in St. Charles, Florissant and St. Louis, she opened the way for the parochial and public school systems.

Philippine was French and spent her lifetime in France until the age of 49.

She had always wanted to be a missionary; had the desire to work with the Indians in the "new world." St. Madeleine Sophie, who was superior at the time, put Philippine off for 12 years. Philippine persisted, though, saying, "I, m am ready to leave at once, even if I have to go to the end of the world on foot." In 1818 she did receive permission and along with her companion religious, traveled over two months by boat to this new world.

Her dream to be with the Indians was put off for many years, however. She spent most of her lifetime beginning schools in Missouri and Louisiana and training young nuns. Think of how difficult that would be, when she did not speak English. Yet she managed, and did not give up.

When she was 72 years old, her dream became reality. She was given permission to work with the Potawatomi Indians at Sugar Creek, Kansas. She and three others set off with \$500 to begin a school for Indians children. She was old and she was not in good health. She was able to be with the Indians for only one year before returning to St. Charles, where she lived until her death.

The Indians loved her. She could not speak their language, yet somehow managed to communicate. They called Philippine "The Woman Who Prayed Always." Prayer, for Philippine, her relationship with God, her love of the Sacred Heart, were essential and were what she shared with others.

We often speak of Philippine's pioneer spirit, the Duchesne Courage,. Her readiness and openness to new experiences, her "New World II vision where she dreamed and made her dreams reality, her generosity in giving her life to these dreams, and her enthusiasm which always remained strong. Let us ask Philippine Duchesne to be with us. Let us pray for one another that we grow in courage, openness, newness, generosity and enthusiasm.

Prayer for Our School :

Together we pray --

May we imitate the spirit of Philippine Duchesne who surmounted every obstacle to set about the work to which she was called, with courage and confidence.

May we imitate the spirit of Philippine who with unfailing confidence in God endured daily privations and misunderstandings in order to fulfill her dream for the children of America.

May we imitate the spirit of Philippine who put aside her own agenda and let God reveal the work she was to do.

May we imitate the spirit of Philippine who never gave up in spite of discouragement and failure, who kept on loving, believing, hoping, because she never lost sight of her vision.

May we imitate the spirit of Philippine who saw in the difficult child the work of grace and the call to love.

May we imitate the life of Philippine who was called by her beloved Indians, "The Woman Who Prays Always."

May we imitate the spirit of Philippine who did all in her power to keep those with whom she worked united in their efforts and united in their love - for the sake of the children.

All this we ask, Lord, in your name. Amen.

We come together today to celebrate the Feast of Philippine Duchesne, the first missionary of the Sacred Heart to come to America. We have much to be grateful for, there is much which has been passed down through the years since her arrival in 1818. Reverend Duffy, also a missionary to the Indians, was once asked to respond to the question, "What have we learned from Philippine Duchesne?" His words could just as easily be for our times?

We have learned the value of steadfast purpose, the success of failure, and the unimportance of our standards of success, the power of grace released by deep, divine desires and simple duties done daily, the old, stark fact that God is the workman and we the tool, so that He often takes the keen edge of our choice plans and uses it in His own way, not ours, producing wonderful results entirely beyond our understanding, but only if the handle of the tool is smoothed and rounded to His Hand by sacrifice and prayer.

Philippine was a woman of courage, strength and love. Because of her, we are here today. During our Mass, let us pray that she will be close to us, that she will help us to live in the ways God has planned for each one of us, with her same courage and strength. May her desire to spread the love of the Heart of Jesus to all people become our own.

Amen.

INTENTIONS FOR THE FEAST OF PHILIPPINE DUCHESNE

-For the Society of the Sacred Heart throughout the world, that individually and as a body the religious renew their commitment today to live for the glory of the Sacred Heart...

(Let us pray to the Lord)

-For all students of the Sacred Heart, especially those at the Academy here, that they learn to love the truth and acquire a sense of prayer...

(Let us pray to the Lord)

-For teachers; that they may be true educators -sharing a love for learning, truth, and God-centered values with their students...

(Let us pray to the Lord)

-For Alumnae of the Sacred heart, especially Children of Mary, who carry out the work of the Society in various vocations, careers, and ministries...

(Let us pray- to the Lord)

-For Native Americans, for minorities, voiceless peoples everywhere, that their deprivation lead them to God, and that those in power respond to their needs...

(Let us pray to the Lord)

-For Health Care professionals; for the nursing and household staff here at Regis who serve us...

(Let us pray to the Lord)

-For the intentions that all of us here hold in our hearts...

(Let us pray to the Lord)

Homily for the Liturgy of St. Philippine Duchesne

Mary Louise Schroen- RSCJ

On this day when we celebrate St. Philippine's feast and the anniversary of the death of the six Jesuit martyrs and their companions in El Salvador I would like to reflect for a few moments on the courage of our saint.

"Courage," says St. Thomas Aquinas, "issues from a holy aggressiveness, a forward movement of the spirit whereby one takes the offensive against dangers, difficulties and labors, undaunted by fear, determined to sweep them from the path and win the goal."

Turning to Philippine, we see this passage of the Summa come to life in her courage: courage of initiative, courage of endurance.

Why courage? Because under the light of God she had vision; vision of the reign of God, which is God present and acting freely, in his world to save, and making use in part of his Son's disciples to do so. A vision of the unobtrusive presence of the mystery of God in mercy; a vision fed by prayer, always prayer, (without Me you can do nothing), the courage of initiative in a world of upheaval, the end of an age. The newness of the American frontiers, the needs of the native Americans, courage of endurance: all those years of misunderstanding, physical privations, and, as she believed, failure.

Courage, vision, prayer, what is Philippine to us? A religious of the Sacred Heart we must honor because she is ours? Or a friend, a guide, a helper in this new age which, like hers, leaves the past behind in shambles and faces an uncertain dawn?

Mother Duchesne, help us in this hour of need! You, so full of tenderness for your family, we too are your family! You so given to your new country...it is our country. Cleanse us of pettiness and greed and fear. Obtain for us the gift of prayer, prayer we need to understand the mystery, of the Cross: not death, but life through death. We give you the little we have. As the Potawatomi said:

" She learned to weave from us, we learned prayer from her face."