May 26th: Memorial of Saint Philip Neri, Priest

Gospel text (*Jn* 17:20-26): Jesus said, "I pray not only for these but also for those who through their word will believe in me. May they all be one as you Father are in me and I am in you. May they be one in us; so the world may believe that you have sent me (...)".

Saint Philip Neri, priest (1515-1595)

EDITORIAL TEAM evangeli.net (based on texts by Saint John Paul II)
(Città del Vaticano, Vatican)

Today, the loving figure of the "saint of joy" even today still maintains intact that irresistible charm that he exercised on all those who drew near him to learn to know and experience the authentic sources of Christian joy.

Leafing through the biography of St Philip, in fact, one is surprised and fascinated by the cheerful and relaxed method he used to educate, supporting each person with fraternal generosity and patience. As is well known, the saint used to put his teaching into short and wise maxims: «Be good, if you can»; «Be simple and humble»; "He who does not pray is a speechless animal"... Behind the cleverness of these and many other "sayings", we are aware of the acute and realistic knowledge he had acquired of human nature and the dynamics of grace. He translated the experience of his long life and the wisdom of a heart inhabited by the Holy Spirit into these immediate, terse teachings.

—St Philip appears as the "prophet of joy", who had decided to follow Jesus, even while being actively involved in the culture of his time, which in many respects is particularly close to that of today.