

Anzelm atyát Stephanus-díjjal tüntették ki! / Fr. Anselm receives the Stephanus Award!

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Homily for Monday, 22 May 2017 (Monday of the sixth week of Easter) / Tegnapi szentbeszed. Sajnos, nincs fordítás!

(Jn15:26-16:4a) Faith may be blind, but it's not deaf and dumb. That's why God gives signs which authenticate faith – signs like the miracles that Jesus once worked and the prophecies that were fulfilled in Him. While these signs make faith supremely rational, they necessarily fall short of absolute proof. Sure, proof might satiate our curiosity but it would also destroy our faith in the process. You see, redemption reverses the knot tied by original sin. Since mankind fell because of faith in the devil's unproven promises, God willed that we also be saved through faith in His own promises, which strictly speaking must also remain unproven. The promise of the Holy Spirit's coming in today's gospel fulfills what the prophet Joel wrote long ago: "I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days." (Joel2:28-29) We can study this and other prophecies (Jer31:33; Ez11:19; Zach12:10) recorded in our Bibles, but sometimes we long for the confirmation that Jesus' contemporaries experienced first-hand when they witnessed His miracles. If only we too had some such tangible confirmation that we are on the right track!

Well, don't lose heart, for this is exactly what our Lord offers us in today's gospel! "When the Advocate comes whom I will send you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, he will testify to me." This testimony amounts to tangible evidence for the individual who experiences it. The Holy Spirit will empower him to overcome the enemy without. This is no small feat in our day, as an anecdote from the desert fathers aptly illustrates. A young monk sought counsel from an old, wise, monk. "Father," he said, "will people of future ages fast and pray for days like we do?" The old monk answered, "No, but, they will be greater than us, because we fight Satan chained. They, will fight Satan unchained!" Today, when open season has been declared on the baby in the womb, when doublespeak even includes the redefinition of gender, when up is down and right is wrong, Satan has definitely been unchained. Today's environmental hazards include cellular pornography, recreational drugs, alcoholism, hedonism, materialism, atheism, egoism, skepticism, pantheism and subjectivism. Anyone who can keep himself pure and undefiled in today's world is great indeed! He himself has become a living miracle of sorts! With St. Paul he can say, "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me." (Gal2:20a)

But before we can overcome the enemy without, we must first conquer the enemy within. Our Lord taught us this by way of example. Before He overcame Satan on Calvary in the public forum, He first overcame the devil in the private arena during His temptation in the desert. We see this same pattern in the lives of the saints, including our own St. Norbert. God's friends first conquered self, the enemy within, during months, even years, of silent and secluded prayer and penance before they tackled the enemy without. Our abbey operates a boys' boarding school. Each night the boys are expected to spend about 20 minutes in silent prayer before the Blessed Sacrament. Yet, when the dismissal bell rings, the chapel empties more rapidly than during the best choreographed fire drill. These young men train and lift weights for hours each day. They're not afraid to face off with formidable opponents on the football field yet, for them, 20 minutes in the chapel seems almost heroic. Self is truly our greatest opponent, for God often forces Satan to retire against his will but God never does violence to our free will. He never forces us to accept His grace. Besides overcoming the world's temptations, in his letter, St. James (1:27) mentions one other moral miracle that constitutes religion pure and undefiled: looking after orphans and widows in their distress. Our Lord taught the same thing when He spoke about

another proof of His power offered in every age. "By this," He said, "everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." (Jn13:35) So be it! St. Rita! Pray for us! Amen!