

Homily - 26th Sunday OT YB

When I was discerning the vocation to the priesthood, I was fortunate to go to the seminary for a "Come and See" weekend...an open house and discernment retreat for those who think God might be calling them to the holy priesthood. In the introductory talk given by the rector at the time, Msgr. Nusca, he shared his vision for priestly formation...he did not merely want form priests for ministry...he wanted to form saints to transform and renew the world. We can have a multitude of priests, but all it takes is one saint to transform and renew the world...think of St Dominic, St Francis fo Assisi, St Catherine of Sienna, St Theresa and his message begins to make sense. This talk was the TSN turning point for me and my discernment to the priesthood. At this point in my life I was thinking, God might be calling me to the priesthood, and to not listen would be a shame, but from the point of baptism, God has called all of us, not just the priests and religious, to be saints...and to not become one would be a tragedy.

Since the beginning of September, we have been learning as we read through *Gaudete et Exsultate*, Rejoice and be glad, that the Christian life is not meant to be a life of mediocrity...a life of just scraping by and just doing the minimum...the Christian life is meant to be a life of greatness as the Children of God with the end being sanctity...holiness...to be a saint. Nothing more, nothing less. The difficulty for us is that we think or have a conception of holiness that is either impossible to attain or is meant for a select few. Our fears, weaknesses, sinfulness hold us back from reaching our true potential as Christians. Pope Francis, echoing the words of Pope St John Paul II and Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI teaches us that we are no to be afraid of becoming holy...of becoming a saint. And we are not going to become saints by relying on our work (Pelagianism) or by relying on some secret knowledge (Gnosticism). We are going to become saints by following the blueprint of the Beatitudes...to climb the mountain to be with our Lord... "Verso L'Alto"...to the heights! That is the mentality of one who desires to be a saint...always to the heights, never settling for mediocrity. And we see signs of this desire to be a saint...not settling for mediocrity in today's world: being patient, being humble, being joyful, being bold and zealous for the things of God, and being faithful to prayer.

But isn't it the case...look to your own experiences...that there was an inner tension...a battle to be patient...or to be humble...or joyful... having a life dedicated to God? If becoming a saint...the Christian life as it is meant by God to be lived is like climbing a mountain...ask any mountain climber, its not easy. The Christian life is not going to be easy...it is a constant battle...a daily struggle. ~~That's why in the prayer to St Michael we say, "Defend us in battle!"~~ And for this struggle...for this battle against our human weaknesses of pride, anger, lust, envy, greed, gluttony and sloth or the lies and deceptions of the devil...we need God's grace...we need His strength...we need Him to deliver us from evil.

See, in any battle...in any struggle, there are two opposing forces - good and evil. This means we who are striving to be holy...to be come saints, ought to become more aware and to pay attention to the good and evil spirits influencing us. Paraphrasing a scene from Sister Act 2...if you wanna be a saint...if you wanna be holy...then you gotta wake up and pay attention. And believe it or not, our biggest

[Peter Kreeft → to be a saint is not for usings of the faint hearted] → Gospel.

Homily - 26th Sunday OT YB

difficulty in life is actually paying attention because we are so distracted by the constant noise from various sources that fills our day...and this noise allows us to escape our reality. This is why one of the tools to help us pay attention...and therefore to help us become holy...to become saints is to have periods of silence in our day. "The Lord speaks to us in a variety of ways...yet we simply cannot do without the silence of prolonged prayer." Here, we can say, "Speak, Lord for your servant is listening."

Although quite obvious that we should reject the evil spirit and accept the good spirit it is actually quite difficult to do. And so, Our Saviour left us the Sacraments...encounters with Him on the cross ^{in service of love} where we know that the good has the definitive victory over the evil. We get to confession and begin again learning how to accept the good and reject the bad in order to follow God's will. We receive the Eucharist, the body and blood of our Lord, to be nourished and strengthen to not give in to the evil spirit lies but to follow God's will, the promptings of the good spirit and continue to follow the call to be a saint...to be holy.

✕ [Saint is a sinner who keeps trying] - St. Josemaria
✕ Every saint has a past, every sinner has a future.

✕ Holy Communion is the shortest & safest way to heaven

↳ St. Pius X

✕ To begin is for everyone. To persevere is for saints

↳ St. Josemaria