

FEAST OF ALL SAINTS

November 1, 2022

+In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,
My very dear sons,

Today's feast, by means of its liturgical texts, transports us into the courts of the heavenly Jerusalem, where all the Saints, those who have fought the good fight on earth, enjoy evermore the fruits of their victory over sin and death. They praise God and the Lamb, that is to say Our Lord, as He appears in the *Apocalypse* of Saint John, knowing their victories derive, in fact, from Christ's own Passion, Death and Resurrection. "And I saw: and behold in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the ancients, a Lamb standing as if slain..." (Apoc. 5:6). The Saints are truly this "cloud of witnesses" the Epistle to the Hebrews mentions (12:1), who encourage us from above in our own combats here below.

In our highly secularized society, it is clear that the strongmen on the political scene (and behind the political scene) are moving forward with a plan to marginalize little by little the presence of the Christian Faith in the Public Square and to push all Christians—especially Catholics—behind the walls of their churches, in such a manner as to make of religion a purely private affair. This is already happening, of course, with measures the current administration has prepared and which, despite the overturning of Roe by the Supreme Court, effectively force upon our consciences such highly immoral practices as abortion and gender confusion. If some of these measures prevail, many Catholic hospitals and schools will have to close their doors—and that would be just the beginning. Despite praiseworthy efforts to organize Catholics in prayer and adoration in order to combat these tendencies, it is clear that our voices are all but ignored in Washington and in the major media sources. Secular society pays less attention to us even than Goliath did to the youth who advanced in his direction, once upon a time, carrying a slingshot and five pebbles in his shepherd's bag...

It is important to situate this situation facing the Catholic Church in America within the context of whole story of the faith described by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews (11):

By faith Abel offered to God a sacrifice more excellent than did Cain...By faith Noe, having been warned concerning things not seen as yet, prepared with pious fear an ark in which to save his household.... By faith he who is called Abraham obeyed by going out into a place which he was to receive for an inheritance.... By faith also Sara herself, being barren, received strength to conceive seed, because she believed that he was faithful who promised.... By faith Moses...left Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he persevered as if seeing him who cannot be seen.

It is a similar effort of Faith that is required of us today, because we too are called to join the “cloud of witnesses” that give praise to God through living in this spirit of Faith that is also the spirit of the Beatitudes.

Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are the meek: for they shall be comforted. Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after justice: for they shall have their fill...

We might note that each Beatitude, in this regard, much like each act of Faith, is a kind of passage from darkness to light, from something painful to consolation. That is just the way it is with the Faith. In the vision of eternity, no sadness enters in, but that is not so in our present condition. Faith is a kind of light, but also a kind of darkness, since we do not see directly the object of our Faith, which is God Himself. Faith might thus be called a “luminous shadow.” Or perhaps it is something like the light that appears at the end of night on the horizon before dawn actually breaks.

But will *we* really win, as David won, in this unequal combat? Will we triumph against the modern Goliath? Of course! That is, as long as we do not try to put on, so to speak, “Saul’s armor.” In other words, as long as we remain within the logic of the true Catholic Faith and do not try to beat the prince of this world at his own game by trying to know all the secrets of his evil at work in society. Being strong in the Faith, simple and sober-minded, we will have a share in Christ’s own victory, which is crushing to the enemies of the Church and quite complete. We just have to wait for God’s hour to bring the final triumph of Truth.

We accomplish all of this, of course, sailing through life in a somewhat leaky boat, Peter’s bark. If the Church remains in her essence, as Saint Paul affirms, “not having wrinkle, or any such thing...holy and without blemish” (Eph. 5:27), she is nevertheless composed of very imperfect human beings. “For see...brethren, that there are not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble” (I Cor. 1:26). The same Saint Paul gives us a clue as to why this is: “But the foolish things of the world hath God chosen, that He may confound the wise; and the weak things of the world hath God chosen, that he may confound the strong” (ibid. v. 27).

Let us continue to call upon all the Saints, who form that “cloud of witnesses” from age to age through Christian history, but especially upon those that have a particular role to play in our time and place. We would do well to pray in particular to Saint Kateri Tekakwitha, the first Native American to be raised to such an honor, to Saint John Neumann, to Saint Elizabeth Seton and to the other American Saints. Let us ask God to grant us the grace of seeing in our lifetime more overturning of unjust laws, such as those which continue to allow abortion and other grave offences against the dignity of human life—crimes that so darken our land. Let us pray as well for the return to what truly builds a civilization based on Natural and Divine Law, the “Civilization of love”, following the expression of several recent Popes. It is the spirit of living Faith that leads to the establishment of such a civilization and of such a culture.

Following the inspiration coming to us from the Three Hearts of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, let us construct right here at Clear Creek a small but significant corner of that true civilization of

love. Saint Augustine spoke of the 'City of God'. May Clear Creek with its monastery become the 'Village of God' and the rugged but beautiful birthplace of a new generation of Saints for America and for the world. Amen. Alleluia.