

Homily Transcript
6th Sunday of Easter
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(automatically generated from spoken homily, as the homily is not written)

We have a lot going on in our readings today and so I'm going to kind of touch on the first reading in the Gospel and then jump into the second reading in which Peter asks or tells the Christians to be prepared to make an apology, we're going to talk a little bit about that.

So diving right in we see in the first reading. Well we've seen the gospel the Christ is having this he sort of enlightening his apostles to the fullness of what it means for him to have come and to go back. He's been talking to them about this for a while but they still haven't gotten in and what he's saying here is that not only were another paracletus a walk with her in advocates someone who walks alongside you.

In the legal term right someone who's there to offer your defense or prosecution. But in this other way in which Paul both Paul and and and Peter bring up within their letters and Christ within Christ, right? I'm going to send you someone in which I can be found in you.

If you if you love me, you keep my commandments. In that day, you will know that I am in my father and you and me and I and you. And the Holy Spirit is the one who brings that about right. The first reading we're shown confirmation, sorry, I had a little bit of a lapse of memory there in which Philip having gone and preached right he's a deacon he's preaching to the people he's telling them all about Christ he's offering this defense and why they should be Christians and he baptizes them.

And then the apostles go down and give them the Holy Spirit. Well, didn't they get it in baptism and this is kind of a point of contention with some of our Protestant brethren that because they reject confirmation they say we're confirmation is not listed in Scripture. Well, here it is.

Here it is, very clearly. From Acts right in which they need to go down to do something that Philip couldn't do and they specifically lay on hands to do it to give the Holy Spirit. So the Holy Spirit has given him baptism in a particular way but he's also given in a different way here because they didn't lay hands in a and make them a priest, right?

Or or deacon as is shown in Acts but rather the Spirit flows out into them. And so we have this establishment of confirmation here which is important for all of these readings because Christ is speaking about a union with him and his father within the Trinity that has been brought about by his suffering and death and the sacraments that he has established in the church that he is established and how is all this done by the very life of the Trinity.

The Holy Ghost. Right. He is. He is the one sent the paraclete to unite us to God. We're united by God by Christ's sacrifice and creation and image and like this and all these things but the Holy Spirit is how God has chosen to give us participation. Within the divine nature.

I am in my Father, okay. He's participating in the Father which makes sense right? One Godhead. And you in me and I in you. Well, how am I going to participate in the divine nature? And what is he doing participating in my nature? And this is sort of that facilitation that goes on by the Holy Spirit.

This is very important for us to take time to think about I don't want to go too deep into them into it. But this is incredibly important and it's followed by if you love me keep my commandments. Now, I can guarantee that no husband has ever told his wife that right.

No matter how much he loves her and she loves him that phrase probably never happens. And that's like the highest form of friendship here. So what is it that God is saying to us? Well, I am not just your friend, right? I'm not just doing nice that sacrificial things for you.

I am also your God. And the relationship I want with you is beyond. What you can imagine. I am in him. You and me and I and you. And so if you really love me you will keep my commandments. And if you only kind of halfway love me then you only halfway keep my commandments.

And this kind of takes us into in into what what Peter's talking here about here. Because God says he's not going to leave us alone. He's going to send this person the the third person of the Trinity the Holy Spirit the same word used in the Greeks up to a gent right for the spirit hovering over the waters.

So the breath of God the Spirit of God the lightness life-giving forts. To accompany us in the tribulations now that Christ has gone to his father. And so what does the second reading talk about? Well Peter Peter talks about making a defense of the faith. This is what we would say an apology.

So Justin a martyr has an apology the defense of the faith we think of it because of the English usage of it since about the 16th century is an apology is we would maybe colloquials colloquials we say an excuse for why I did it but it's it's really an asking of forgiveness for some sort of infringement, right? Maybe maybe we stepped on someone's toes, maybe we weren't we indulged in our anger. But what it means here in what it originally meant was to offer a defense. Based off of reasoned explanation and the facts. And so if Peter is saying, look, you're going out to talk to people who may never have heard of Christ.

They're pagans. They may not believe in the scriptures. They may also be Hebrews who do believe in the scriptures Jews in the diaspora that understand these things and you need to know your faith in such a way as to offer it to them. You need to be with studied in your faith and have an explanation and we say oh yeah, I could do that.

I could do that. Yeah, absolutely. But if if we really pressed each other, right? If we really said, how do you parishioner? X, right. It's hard to do this with like not looking at somebody specifically. How do you? Know that he is the Messiah. I know you've been baptized.

I know you've gone to church for you know, five years ten years 30 years 40 years. I know you've made sacrifice to be here, but why? How do you know that it's true? And well, it's I just feel it. Is that good enough to usually bring people into?

A different communion. And so, we have to have like this we have to have the knowledge to defend it. But directly after that he says, we also have to have it in charity. I know the the Twitter verse and the Facebooks are alive with you know, this incident that happened in which somebody called to make a defense right to the chancery but they kind they they were they used you know, pretty harsh language.

They were abusive to the secretary. That's that's not defending what is true. Or if it is it's the second part of what Peter says, right? How effective of a defense can you offer if you are sinning while you're doing it? Or if you have a secret sin that you keep in these.

I know I can do this one because nobody's gonna know. And so it's an all or nothing game because as we grow in our knowledge for apologetics the science of giving a defense a reasoned explanation of the faith, we're to be growing deeper in that relationship with God. Primarily by means of the Holy Spirit right and the outpouring of the merits and graces from Christ on the cross facilitated by him through his church and the sacraments.

And in fact as Christians baptize were to go out and preach and by confirmation we are strengthening the gifts of the Holy Spirit so as to go and do these things in particular.

And so to take a step back and to not offer that apology that defense when we encounter somebody and I don't mean defense in I got you. But I mean defense in this. Son daughter this friend stranger. I've met on the street is why I am so happy in my faith.

It is why I have joy. Wherefore if you struggle with joy, this is why I come to church on Sunday. It's not just because a rule forces me to. This is why I have bent my life. To this pursuit. Right? People can tell you why they went to school to become an engineer or a doctor or a literary critic or you know, whatever it is.

There's a motivation there. It's usually a very important motivation. But what does your motivation for showing up on Sunday? Well, I just don't want to go to health. Okay, I mean, that's a motivation but it's not the type of motivation that takes what the church holds in her deposit.

Makes it one's own in the appropriate way and takes it out into the world. That takes something more. If this is just a safety net for you. Then the relationship needs to deepen with God. It's a place to start right? It's not a bad place to start to really good place to start right?

It's imperfect contrition, which is all we need for Sacramento Confession. Praise God. But we want to be deepening that. We need to know our God and we need to know. His commandments that we may show that we love Him by obeying them. Apologetics is away in which we come to know them and share them with others.

And that's what we're called to do. We are called to live out our faith not only knowing these things but also living them in virtue. The truth with a church teaches and God has revealed in charity. I not only want to be naturally nice to you and respectful. But I want to I want to take the time to present this in a way that is easier for you to receive than to reject.

So that you can be drawn into this relationship with God and spend eternity with Him. That's what we're given here in the readings today, and that's what we are called to. We are called to live a life of apologetics a life in which our reason for our faith has been well thought out.

We have reflected well on our relationship with God. This week, let us take some time to reflect upon that relationship and the its meaning to us. It's impetus. It's the fire that burns within us. That has come up with an explanation for why.