



61st Year

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THE FRUITS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The feast of All Saints is the epilogue of the movable feasts of the Ecclesiastical year and the rich fruit of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. Because the life of the Saints, both of the Old as also of the New Testament, is the triumphant proof of the presence of the grace of the Comforter in the Church.

All saints an example of faith and power

The first fruit of the Holy Spirit is faith. With this power of faith the Saints of the Old Testament, patriarchs, prophets, kings, the righteous ones, "defeated kingdoms", in other words, they faced absolutist states and they defeated them with the power of God: for example Moses, the Pharaohs of Egypt, the three children, the Persians, Gideon, the Midianites, David the enemies of Israel et. al.

With the enlightenment of faith they worked wondrous powers. As the Apostle mentions: "they worked righteousness", they rendered justice and implemented the justice of God in their life. The sense of righteousness was manifest in the righteous Job, in the righteous Abraham, in the righteousness of Solomon and in everyone who respected God. Characteristically David chants "so that you may be justified in your words".

With living faith in the true God the Saints "obtained promises", in other words, they saw the fulfillment of the promises of God to them: for example Abraham through faith became the father of a whole nation and the spiritual father of all the righteous ones. But also the prophets saw their prophecies being fulfilled. For example Him whom Isaiah saw symbolically on a high throne, in other words, God: "whom Isaiah saw symbolically in a high throne God, him the Virgin Mary gave birth to as a man.

Faith strengthened them to face illnesses (like Hezekiah), various threats (from beasts like Daniel, from the fire, like the three children, from slaughter, like David, from Saul) and times they

pursued their enemies like Joshua of Nun). They saw the dead being resurrected, like the Prophet Elijah who resurrected the son of the widow.

All saints an example of patience and martyrical life

The second and essential fruit of the Comforter is hope. Hope springs forth from patience in trials. The more we endure in trials and afflictions which the grace of God allows, all the more, hope in holiness and eternal life increases. The Saints of the Church forbore persecutions, humiliations, imprisonments (Heb. 11:35, 36). They underwent a martyrical death (verse 37) but they were also forced to live with deprivations so that they would not lose the witness of faith in the true God “so that they could obtain a better resurrection” (verse 35). In other words, for them to participate in the common resurrection of the dead and in the common honor and glory from God, as befits the Saints.

An exhortation for us to become contemporary Saints

Many times we ask ourselves if we, Christians of our age, are able to become saints and to be numbered in the choir of All Saints. Because God himself exhorts us: “become ye holy that I am holy” (1 Peter 1:16), but also the Apostle Paul urges us to conduct our spiritual struggle with patience (Heb. 12:1). Our faith in Christ will make the hope of our sanctification certain, as certain as it is that Christ sat at the right of God His Father, in order to assure us that the path of holiness is achievable and true.

And if we disbelieve because we are not doing miracles like the Saints, again the Lord chases away from us this hesitation telling us: “Do not rejoice that (with the invocation of my power) even the demons are submitting to you. Rather rejoice that your names (on account of your faith and patience) have been written in heaven” (Lk. 10:20).

Archim. Ch. N.

SUNDAY OF ALL SAINTS

The most divine Fathers appointed that we perform the present feast after the descent of the all holy Spirit, in order to show, in a certain manner, that the presence of the all holy Spirit acted, through the apostles, great and wondrous things: It sanctified and adorned with wisdom our fellow men of “our own make”, in other words, and with them made up the gap which was created by that angelic rank, which out of haughtiness fell (with Lucifer as leader) from his angelic position. And it sent them to God, through Jesus Christ, others with martyrdom and death and others with the virtuous lifestyle and conduct which they showed during their earthly life. And it works all the supernatural and exceedingly wondrous works.

We must know that during the present feast we are celebrating all whom the good-giving Holy Spirit sanctified, that is: the most high and sanctifying “intellects”, in other words the nine ranks of Angels. The Prophets and the sacred Apostles. The Martyrs and the Hierarchs. The Hieromartyrs and the Monastic martyrs. The Monastic Saints, the Righteous and all the choirs of holy Women. And all the anonymous Saints, together with whom let all the Saints be numbered who will be shone forth in the future from the bosom of the Church. And first of all, and among everyone, and together with everyone, we are celebrating the Holy of Holies, the most holy and incomparably higher even than those angelic ranks, our Lady and Maiden, Mary the Theotokos, the ever virgin.

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