

August 2013 Reflection

In his letter to the members of the 131st Supreme Convention of the Knights of Columbus, a portion of which is on the homepage of our website, His Eminence Tarcisio Cardinal Bertone, Secretary of State of the Holy See, in the name of Pope Francis, encouraged all Knights to call on the intercession of Saint Joseph:

“Among the first acts of his pontificate, the Holy Father wished to add the name of Saint Joseph to each of the Eucharistic Prayers of the Mass. It is his hope that the Knights, in venerating the memory of this great Saint, will beg his intercession for the protection of the many blessings which the Lord has poured out upon them and their families, ***and work with ever greater commitment for the spread of the Gospel, the conversion of hearts and the renewal of the temporal order in Christ.***”

What does it mean to “work with ever greater commitment for the spread of the Gospel, the conversion of hearts and the renewal of the temporal order in Christ?” It means that we are to be evangelizers not only in our words, but even more so in our deeds. Saint Joseph, Patron of the Universal Church, was the quiet man of the Gospel. There is not a recorded word of his. He simply did. We are to be the same as the Letter of Saint James instructs us, “Be doers of the word and not hearers only” (James 1:22). How? By being Catholic Gentlemen! What does that mean? Over this year, I hope that we accept the invitation of our Grand Knight when he spoke to us at the end of last year and explore together in word and deed exactly what being a Catholic Gentleman means in the United States in the 21st century and specifically on the campus of The Catholic University of America. It is not the same as it was in the 19th century when the Knights of Columbus was founded, but elements are the same, particularly being men of charity who do not simply talk about being charitable, but are charitable.

This charity can be lived in the way that Saint Joseph lived it by being what Pope Francis called in his inaugural homily on the Solemnity of Saint Joseph a “protector.”

“The vocation of being a “protector”, however, is not just something involving us Christians alone; it also has a prior dimension which is simply human, involving everyone. It means protecting all creation, the beauty of the created world, as the Book of Genesis tells us and as Saint Francis of Assisi showed us. It means respecting each of God’s creatures and respecting the environment in which we live. It means protecting people, showing loving concern for each and every person, especially children, the elderly, those in need, who are often the last we think about. It means caring for one another in our families: husbands and wives first protect one another, and then, as parents, they care for their children, and children themselves, in time, protect their parents. It means building sincere friendships in which we protect one another in trust, respect, and goodness. In the end, everything has been entrusted to our protection, and all of us are responsible for it. Be protectors of God’s gifts!”

Brother Knights, through the intercession and example of Saint Joseph, let us as Catholic Gentlemen live well this call of Pope Francis to all Knights.

Vivat Jesus!

Fr. Frank

Click here for a Knights of Columbus Catholic Information Service Booklet entitled *Saint Joseph: Our Father in Faith*