

A SPIRIT OF FAITH

FROM THE TEXT:

FOR A SPIRITUAL RENEWAL (pp. 45-46)



This morning, through the intercession of St. Joseph, let us ask for an increase in faith, hope and charity. An increase in faith: to believe that the Lord has given us a mission and all the graces necessary to fulfill it. A faith to which we witness in a practical way by living as if everything depends on us, and by trusting in God as if everything depends on him!

A faith that is expressed in the *Pact or Secret of Success*, which is part of our prayers. I am absolutely convinced that faith is the root of all holiness. A spirit of faith is the principle of holiness. From faith springs hope, charity and the religious virtues. From faith springs the fruits of the apostolate. One who believes will see God because he/she will be saved. One who believes knows that it is necessary to run to the Tabernacle to receive the strength needed for the apostolate. Believe and what was proclaimed will take place. You will see it!

When faith is missing, the root is missing, and when a tree lacks roots it dies. The Lord answers prayers in proportion to our faith. If a person has little faith it is like not having enough fabric. The result is that we are able to make only a small garment, one big enough just for a child.

We must allow ourselves to be sustained by the grace of our vocation and office. When God gives a person a vocation—a mission to a soul—he also gives him/her all the graces, all the help, necessary to carry out that mission.

God never fails us. We might fail him due to our inconstancy and weak faith, but God never fails us. And for us [Paulines] in particular, we also have the proof of facts: we have taken the Gospel to more than 20 countries and yet we began with nothing, indeed even less than nothing because a person, besides

being nothing, might also be a sinner. We must perfect [in ourselves] the intentions, dispositions and trusting spirit that characterized the beginning of our mission—a mission that Primo Maestro could not refuse under the pain of damnation.

Faith in God, not in ourselves. Make a “pact” with God before two witnesses—Mary, Queen of Apostles and St. Paul—because two witnesses are needed for important things. Begin like this: “We must reach the degree of perfection and heavenly glory to which you have destined us, and perform the apostolate of the editions in a holy manner. But we see that we are very weak, ignorant, incapable and inadequate in every way....” Let us sincerely admit all our weaknesses. Too often we attribute to ourselves, instead of to God, what we do. Too often we expect gratitude, while this goes only to God. Let us make a true pact with the Lord, that is, let us tell him what we want to give him: “To seek wholeheartedly, in all things, only and always, your glory and the good of souls” (and the first of these souls is our own). Then let us tell him what we expect from him: “We trust that on your part, you will give us a good spirit, grace, knowledge and the means for doing good”: this is what we want from God.

Our piety must not be sterile, performed only to fulfill as quickly as possible a duty that weighs on us. It must be a piety that truly makes us feel our need for God; that truly leads us to great holiness.

Faith in study: this will yield abundant fruit. Too often we invert things even with regard to education: we rely on our talents, our qualities, the spirit of the world. We want to please others, to do things their way so that they will love us.... But that is like holding a candlestick over a void: “We do not doubt you, but we fear our inconstancy and weakness.” We might fail God, but he will never fail us.

Let us live according to the spirit of the *Secret of Success*. Recite it every morning. Let us rely on it because it is a good, solid base on which to build. And it will result in vital works because Christ is in them. Thus our works will not be insufficient to keep us alive; our initiatives will not be sterile and ineffective. We will not be cadavers but people who race to reach the finish line so as to win the prize (cf. Phil. 3:14).

Meditation of Fr. Alberione,
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