



- A RESOURCE FOR ONGOING FORMATION -

Part 4: Building the Kingdom of God on Earth

9. Our Apostolate of Good Example

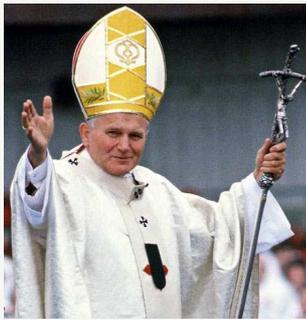
Witnessing to the good yet to come and obliged to acquire purity of heart because of the vocation they have embraced, they should set themselves free to love God and their brothers and sisters. Rule 12

Before Pilate, Christ proclaims that he 'has come into the world, to bear witness to the truth'. The Christian is not to be ashamed then of testifying to our Lord. In situations that require witness to the faith, the Christian must profess it without equivocation, after the example of St Paul before his judges. We must keep 'a clear conscience towards God and towards men'.

Catechism of the Catholic Church 2471 (p 527)



Agrippa said to Paul, 'Are you so quickly persuading me to become a Christian?' Paul replied, 'Whether quickly or not, I pray to God that not only you but all who are listening to me today might become such as I am—except for these chains.' (Acts 26.28-19)



John Paul II Crossing the Threshold of Hope (p 180)

Significantly, the Council...reminds us of the universal call to holiness in the Church. This vocation is universal and concerns each of the baptised, every Christian. It is always very personal, connected to work, to one's profession. It is an account rendered of the talents each person has received—whether one has made good or bad use of them. We know that the words the Lord Jesus spoke about the man who had buried the talent were very harsh and threatening. (Cf. Matt 25.25-30)

Questions for consideration

Who has influenced you most in the way you live your life?

What is it in others that has encouraged you to live your Christian life more faithfully?

Whom are you influencing, and how?

...they did not nail him, but tied him...a burnt offering ready and acceptable to God, he looked up to heaven and said:

'I bless thee, because thou hast deemed me worthy of this day and hour, to take my part in the number of martyrs, in the cup of thy Christ, for "resurrection to eternal life" of my soul in immortality of the Holy Spirit; among whom I may be received beforehand and fulfilled, thou art the true God without any falsehood. For this and for everything I praise thee, I bless thee, I glorify thee, through the eternal and heavenly High Priest, Jesus Christ, thy blessed Servant, through whom be glory to thee with him and the Holy Spirit both now and unto the ages to come. Amen'

And when he had concluded the Amen...the men attending the fire lighted it. And when the flame flashed forth, we saw a miracle...For the fire made the shape of a vaulted chamber, like a ship's sail filled with wind, and made a wall around the body of the martyr. And he was in the midst, not as burning flesh, but as...gold and silver refined in a furnace. And we perceived such a sweet aroma as the breath of incense or some other precious spice.

Martyrdom of Polycarp, 14–15 in *Library of Christian Classics* Vol 1, Early Christian Fathers (p 154-155)



Scripture—

III Sam 12. 1-9, 13

And the Lord sent Nathan to David. He came to him, and said to him, ' There were two men in a certain city, one rich and the other poor. The rich man had very many flocks and herds; but the poor man had nothing but one little ewe lamb, which he had bought. He brought it up, and it grew up with him and his children; it used to eat of his meagre fare, and drink from his cup, and lie in his bosom, and it was like a daughter to him. Now there came a traveller to the rich man, and he was loath to take one of his own flock or herd to prepare for the wayfarer who had come to him, but he took the poor man's lamb, and prepared that for the guest who had come to him.' Then David's anger was greatly kindled against the man. He said to Nathan, ' As the Lord lives, the man who has done this deserves to die; he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity. '

Nathan said to David, ' You are the man! Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: I anointed you king over Israel, and I rescued you from the hand of Saul; I gave you your master's house, and your master's wives into your bosom, and gave you the house of Israel and of Judah; and if that had been too little, I would have added much more. Why have you despised the word of the Lord, to do what is evil in his sight? You have struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and have taken his wife to be your wife, and have killed him with the sword...' David said to Nathan, ' I have sinned against the Lord. ' Nathan said to David, ' Now the Lord has put away your sin; you shall not die. '