

Knights of Columbus
Council 459
Spiritual Training
August: Faith and Reason

Opening Prayer

Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created. And You shall renew the face of the earth.

Faith and Reason

- Bishop Barron, an auxiliary bishop in Los Angeles and evangelist through his Word on Fire website, recently addressed a convocation of Catholic bishops in Florida, and something he said caught my eye (<http://www.ewtnnews.com/catholic-news/US.php?id=15868>):
- “I hate dumbed down Catholicism. What do I mean by that? It puts a huge stress on the superficial, the ‘banners and balloons Catholicism’ as I call it. We are a smart religion. When we don’t express Catholicism in a smart way, people fall away,”
- **Brothers, faith and reason are not opposites. In fact, reason and science can help us to know God.**
- Let’s start with the natural law,
 - We have built into our hearts the ability to know right from wrong.
 - All law comes from God's divine law and natural law is our participation in God's divine law.
- What is Reason
 - the power which human beings have by which we are able to think and grow in our understanding of the truth.
 - For example, we can come to know God’s existence by observing the order and design of the universe, as well as by seeing the perfection of his creations (think about a rainbow or a crystal formation or a beautiful mountain or the ocean)

- Scientific theories can help us explain natural laws, such as why there is gravity or $2 + 2 = 4$
- But, in order to know about God fully, we need faith.
 - Faith is the gift from God whereby man assents to and believes in God and the truths he has revealed (CCC 153, 155)
 - The truths are revealed in scripture and passed down through the Church.
- So how do faith and reason work hand in hand
 - Faith allows us to believe things that God has revealed
 - Reason helps us understand what we believe and why we believe it
 - Faith and revelation complete our understanding and make up for what could be lacking in ability to understand or in our weakness to follow the natural law.
- As an example: Through reason we can come to accept that a God exists, but we need faith to accept deeper revelations he has given to others before us, such as his nature as a Trinity.
- Another example--the 10 commandments
 - The Ten Commandments were revealed to us by God through Moses and passed down in the scriptures and the teachings of the Church.
 - While Faith allows us to believe that these are commandments of God, reason helps to explain why God selected these commandments and why it makes sense to believe them.
- The more I learn about Church teaching, the more it makes sense to me.
- Which is why we should heed Bishop Barron's words to not dumb down the faith, but rather we should lift people up to higher levels of reasoning so that they too can better understand the faith revealed to them.

Closing Prayer

Act of Faith

O my God, I firmly believe that thou art one God in three Divine persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. I believe that thy Divine Son became man and died for our sins, and that he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe theses and all the truths that the Holy Catholic Church teaches, because thou hast revealed them, who can neither deceive nor be deceived. Amen.

Resources

- Catechism of the Catholic Church, Ch 2., ¶¶ 50, Ch. 3, ¶¶ 142-184
- Outlines of the Catholic Faith, Section I (pages 2-3)