

# Fr. John's message- The Holy Spirit manifests as an "Encouraging Advocate"

May 17, 2020

Greetings,

As we approach the end of the Academic Year, we sense accomplishments, relationships, teamwork, and determination of the Class of 2020 that have inspired many. Great job, Class of 2020. May the day come that all may celebrate together. And for those to be continuing to matriculate at the College, may the upcoming transition unveil "advocates" who manifest the Holy Spirit.

Interestingly enough, we catch up today with Jesus' disciples in their own transition. (John 14:15-21) While Jesus at the Last Supper tells them that He is leaving, He also tells them that He is sending "another advocate". Today, we understand an "advocate" as a lawyer or a mentor: someone that speaks for us. He or she is at times crucial. But, the original meaning of "advocate" is a "comforter" or an "encourager". Truly at the College, you met the Spirit in a number of "advocates" who encouraged you directly with their pointers or indirectly by how they live. You will remember many of them, and will draw on these experiences as situations arise. These advocates manifest the Holy Spirit.

I remember earlier in the year participating at a Smith College campfire with Williams students. The Smithies had invited Williams Catholics to gather for a campfire on a Friday evening. On that chilly September evening, students stayed close to the fire. They ate, sang songs and joked around. I noticed after a while that Emeline went away from the fire. I caught the Smithie staring up. When I followed her gaze, I noticed them for the first time. And, there were so many. So many stars. Even though people were loud nearby, the sight quieted me. When I joined her, Emeline began naming the stars for me. She helped me to see what I had not seen.

And so with sports. Many appreciate baseball, lacrosse, football or basketball. Having cultivated an appreciation for a particular sport, they are able to see what others can't. What we cultivate is so important. What we cultivate is what we see.

Whether you enjoy the stars or a particular sport, I hope you continue to do so. Yet, as the Academic Year ends, be open to the Spirit manifesting itself as an "advocate" or encouraging person. While a number of "advocates" encouraged you along at the College, notice who encourages you as you enter this time of transition. Just as Jesus' disciples, you are not abandoned. The "advocate" will be with the Graduates as well as the the undergraduates. The key is to anticipate, hope for these encouraging advocates, truly signs of the Holy Spirit.

As we prepare for the summer, decide to anticipate these "encouragers". And, be prepared to notice the "advocates" who encourage you. They manifest the Holy Spirit.

With prayers as you synthesize course material.

Blessings,  
Fr. John

Pope Francis Sunday Mass at the Santa Marta Chapel Vatican

Masses Streamed in Western Massachusetts

Mass at Sts. Patrick and Raphael Parish

A Prayer of St. John Henry Newman, who worked with students in England, strengthened his trust in God. In some moments ahead, you may find it helpful in nourishing trust in the Holy Spirit often manifested as an "encourager".

God has created me to do Him some definite service.

He has committed some work to me which He has not committed to another.

I have my mission.

I may never know it in this life, but I shall be told it in the next.

I am a link in a chain, a bond of connection between persons.

He has not created me for naught.

I shall do good; I shall do His work.

I shall be an angel of peace, a preacher of truth in my own place, while not intending it if I do but keep His commandments.

Therefore, I will trust Him, whatever I am, I can never be thrown away.

If I am in sickness, my sickness may serve Him, in perplexity, my perplexity may serve Him.

If I am in sorrow, my sorrow may serve Him.

He does nothing in vain.

He knows what He is about.

He may take away my friends.

He may throw me among strangers.

He may make me feel desolate, make my spirits sink, hide my future from me. Still, He knows what He is about

Blessings!

Fr. John

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