

**Homily for the Mass at the Sports Faith International
Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony
Second Sunday of Lent - Cycle C
February 24, 2013**

Peyton Hall, Lake Forest, Illinois

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Bishop of Springfield in Illinois**

S.S.P.: Not to us, but to God give the glory.

- I. Conversation during the Blackhawks game at the United Center with a hockey fan from Saskatoon, Saskatchewan
 - A. Said he was baptized Catholic, went to Catholic school, but was now an atheist.
 - B. I asked why.
 - C. He said he believed in science.
 1. I pointed out that faith and science are not opposed to each other.
 2. He agreed.
 - D. He said that he thought it was discriminatory that women couldn't be priests.
 1. I pointed out that God made men and women different, that men could not be mothers and women could not be fathers, how Jesus called only men to be his apostles while women like Mary Magdalene were also close disciples, and that women in fact have had powerful positions for many years in the Church, such as CEO's of Catholic colleges and hospitals.
 2. He agreed (it's difficult to argue with a Canadian, they're so nice!), but said he was still an atheist.
 - E. He said he believed that nothing created him and that when he died there was nothing more.
 1. I said that faith was a gift and you either have it or you don't.
 2. As we were leaving, I said that I would pray for him.
 3. He said thank you!

- II. Some lessons learned from this:
 - A. You never know where you may be called to be a witness for Christ.
 - B. Some hints of how many people think today, especially the young.
 - C. The failure of Catholic schools to develop disciples, i.e., followers of Jesus who have a personal relationship with Christ.

- III. Today we celebrate those who have made a connection between sports and faith.
- A. We honor those who have excelled, not just in athletic pursuits, but in the pursuit of a personal relationship with the Lord.
 - B. Today's Gospel is about the Transfiguration of the Lord, when Christ was revealed in all His glory.
- IV. In William Shakespeare's play, *Henry V*, there is a powerful scene preceding the Battle of Agincourt on St. Crispin's Day, October 25, 1415. The English are outnumbered by the French five to one. When King Henry overhears someone wish that some of the unemployed men back in England could have been with them to help them in battle, the King delivers his impassioned address to his troops in what is known as the St. Crispin's Day speech:

*The fewer men, the greater share of honour.
 God's will, I pray thee, wish not one man more. . . .
 This day is called the Feast of Crispian:
 He that outlives this day, and comes safe home,
 Will stand a-tiptoe when the day is named,
 And rouse him at the name of Crispian. . . .
 This story shall the good man teach his son;
 And Crispin Crispian shall ne'er go by,
 From this day to the ending of the world,
 But we in it shall be remember'd;
 We few, we happy few, we band of brothers;
 For he today that sheds his blood with me
 Shall be my brother; be he ne'er so vile,
 This day shall gentle his condition:
 And gentlemen in England now abed
 Shall think themselves accursed they were not here,
 And hold their manhoods cheap whiles any speaks
 That fought with us upon Saint Crispin's day. (IV, iii)*

As we all know, roused and inspired by Henry's oratory, the King and his band of brothers go on to victory, despite the overwhelming odds. After the Battle of Agincourt, when it was apparent that the English had been victorious, Henry V proclaimed,

Come, go we in procession to the village . . .

but with this acknowledgment,

That God fought for us. . .

Do we all holy rites.

Let there be sung "Non nobis" and "Te Deum."

The King was referring to the Latin hymn of praise to God called the "*Te Deum*" and to the opening words of Psalm 115: "*Non nobis, Domine, non nobis, sed nomini tuo, da Gloriam*" - "Not to us. Lord, not to us, but to your name, give the glory."

V. May God give us this grace. Amen.