

"The Power of Personal Testimony"

St. Peter says in 1 Pe 3:15 "Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have". In the Acts 4:20 the Apostles say, "for we cannot stop speaking about what we have seen and heard". St. John in 1 Jn 1:1 says: "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched – this we proclaim concerning the Word of life". These passages speak of the need for and the power of personal testimony. Even if they may wrestle with a teaching or practice of the Church, few people will counter or refute what you have experienced first-hand - when articulated clearly, sincerely and humbly, with courage and conviction.

Some cases in the court of law can be lost or won based on the testimony of the witnesses. The "case for Christ" and for His Church can be won or lost based on our testimony in this way: our personal witness or testimony, given with humility and accuracy, can attract someone from Christ and His Church, can "make a case" for Christ and His Church, that is, for the validity and the value of both. When people hear from us as an "eye witness", as someone who speaks daily to the God you have come to know and love, and has surrendered your life to in worship and service, they too may "want what you've got". On the other hand, a poor witness can distance or keep someone away from the Faith - from Christ and His Church. If by your words or actions people have reason to mistrust Christ or His Church you will have failed to give a powerful witness of the One we call Lord. Let it not be so! Be ready and willing to share who Christ is and to live like you believe it!

Prepare and share your testimony whenever the occasion arises! Be ready to give the 30-second, the 60-second or the 3-minute versions - depending on the type of opportunity that arises. (Have a 3-hour version too, in case you're flying cross country and a fellow passenger brings up the topic of God and Church - which almost inevitably happens to me every time I fly someone!) I hope my personal testimony, in its shorter and longer versions, will aid you as you prepare and share your faith in Christ with others.

For more information on how to prepare and share your personal testimony, please refer to "Discovering My Experience of God" (Fr. Frank DeSiano and Fr. Kenneth Boyack) this is the link for the book: http://www.pncea.org/store/index.asp?DEPARTMENT_ID=47

Contact us if you wish to schedule a training workshop on this and related topics for your parish or group: Rosa.Mera@archsa.org or 210-734-1990.