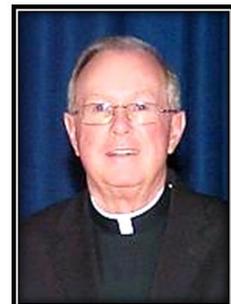




THE WALLS WON'T CATCH COLD

Who is that man? I know that many of you will be asking that questions of yourselves and others after a glance at the front cover of today's bulletin. And while I will give you the answer to that question further along in this message, you can always find information about the picture on the front cover inside the bulletin. For now, it is enough to tell you that the man on the front cover is not ...

... the Reverend Monsignor Donald T. Bennett. Monsignor Bennett is a Priest of the Diocese of Rockville Centre who after seventeen years of Pastoral service to the Church in Hicksville, was given permission by Bishop Murphy to *come home* and put his share of the Priesthood at the service of the Church in Freeport, where since 1 September, he has been discovering with the help of parishioners, what makes *coming home is what it's all about*.



No, the man featured on the front cover of today's bulletin is Saint Robert Bellarmine: the Patron Saint of Catechists. And because today is Catechetical Sunday, we decided to feature Saint Robert Bellarmine on today's front cover.

"The Church has always considered catechesis one of her primary tasks, for, before Christ ascended to His Father after His resurrection, He gave the Apostles a final command - to make disciples of all nations and to teach them to observe all that He had commanded. He thus entrusted them with the mission and power to proclaim to humanity what they had heard, what they had seen with their eyes, what they had looked upon and touched with their hands, concerning the Word of Life. He also entrusted them with the mission and power to explain with authority what He had taught them, His words and actions, His signs and commandments. And He gave them the Spirit to fulfill this mission.

Very soon the name of catechesis was given to the whole of the efforts within the Church to make disciples, to help people to believe that Jesus is the Son of God, so that believing they might have life in His name, and to educate and instruct them in this life and thus build up the Body of Christ. The Church has not ceased to devote her energy to this task." (*Catechesi Tradendae*)

That energy was certainly living in Saint Robert Bellarmine. "His preaching and his catechesis" writes Pope Emeritus XVI, "have that same character of essentiality which he had learned from his Ignatian education, entirely directed to concentrating the soul's energies on the Lord Jesus intensely known, loved and imitated. In the writings of this man of governance one is clearly aware, despite the reserve behind which he conceals his sentiments, of the primacy he gives to Christ's teaching. Saint Bellarmine thus offers a model of prayer, the soul of every activity: a prayer that listens to the word of God that is satisfied in contemplating his grandeur that does not withdraw into self but is pleased to abandon itself to God. A hallmark of Bellarmine's spirituality is his vivid personal perception of God's immense goodness. This is why our Saint truly felt he was a beloved son of God. It was a source of great joy to him to pause in recollection, with serenity and simplicity, in prayer and in contemplation of God."

Saint Robert Bellarmine was one of the most important cardinals of the Catholic Reformation and became a Doctor of the Church. He was born to an impoverished noble Italian family. His early intellectual accomplishments gave his father hope that Bellarmine would restore the family's fortunes through a political career. His mother's wish that he enter the Society of Jesus prevailed.

Although he was one of the most powerful men in Rome, Bellarmine lived an austere life. He gave most of his money to the poor. Once he gave the tapestries from his living quarters to the poor, saying that the walls wouldn't catch cold. While he took little regard for his own comforts, he always saw to it that his servants and aides had everything they needed. Saint Robert Bellarmine was canonized by Pope Pius XI in 1930 and declared a Doctor of the Church in 1931. Taken from <http://www.ignatianspirituality.com/ignatian-voices/16th-and-17th-century-ignatian-voices/st-robert-bellarmino-sj>