

PROMPTED BY THE SPIRIT/ ST. ATHANASIUS: MONDAY, 2ND MAY, 2022, WEEK III, EASTER.

In our First Reading of today, we read about Stephen. He was a man blessed by God and filled with grace and power, who worked signs and wonders amongst the people. He was a man of unusual wisdom and most importantly, we heard that it was the Holy Spirit that prompted what he said and did.

Let us pause here and reflect - Stephen's actions and words were prompted by the Holy Spirit.

The question is what prompts my words and actions?

The people who opposed Stephen were prompted by jealousy and pride. In the Gospel, some people were looking for Jesus, not prompted by the desire to know the truth or be transformed but by the desire to be fed. Their seemingly good gesture was not prompted by the Holy Spirit but by a desire for food.

Many times our actions and words appear to proceed from love, from a passion for justice or a sense of discipline, but they are prompted by pride, jealousy, cruelty, passion for revenge, hatred, self-love, lust etc.

St. Athanasius

Today, the Holy Mother Church celebrates the memorial of one of her illustrious sons, St. Athanasius (295-373).

He was a renowned Christian theologian, a Church Father and a defender of the faith. He is popularly called the Father of Orthodoxy.

At the age of 27, Athanasius, then a Deacon and assistant to Bishop Alexander of Alexandria, defended the Church against Arianism at the council of Nicea (325AD).

Three years after the council, he succeeded the Bishop of Alexandria. He was a Bishop for 47 years but he spent 17 out of those 47 years in exile because of his uncompromising orthodoxy.

Athanasius knew the Catholic faith - he loved it, taught it, lived it and died by it. May his prayers help us so that we may be always taught and led by the Spirit.