

XXI Trinity 2025

Sermon – Saint Joseph Parish

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Ephesians 6.10-20 St. John 4.46-54

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Some people believed in Jesus because of his message of hope. Even a group of despised Samaritans Jesus spent some time with teaching, confessed him to be the Savior of the World. Other people followed Jesus because they had seen him perform miracles...signs and wonders...and they wanted to see more.

This morning's Gospel commences with Jesus on his way back to Cana in Galilee. This is Gentile territory and the place he performed his first miracle...turning water into wine at the wedding feast. Jesus performed many miracles...the signs and wonder Saint John says are the definitive proof he is the promised Messiah of the Old Testament...and the Son of God of the New Testament.

A government official who lived in Capernaum, about 20 miles from Cana, heard about Jesus and came to him for help. His son was sick and at the point of death. He had heard Jesus was able to do things no one else could do. The doctors couldn't do anything more for his son. Maybe Jesus could heal his son.

Our desperate dad sets off on the long journey to find Jesus. He isn't interested in getting Jesus to put on a magic show for him. He has only one thing in mind...get Jesus to make his sick son well again. When he finds Jesus, he asks him to come back to Capernaum with him, and heal his son.

This was a man of great courage and yes...desperation. He was also a high-ranking government official, a man in authority, who was used to giving orders and having them followed. The Gospel doesn't say he was a Jew or Gentile, although his important role as a government official suggests he was a Gentile. By coming to Jesus for help, he showed humility he may not have been accustomed to showing...a testimony he believe Jesus could actually do something of him.

Jesus responds to our desperate dad's plea for help by saying no no will believe unless they see signs and wonders. What did Jesus mean by this seemingly cold and indifferent response? Jesus was testing the man's faith and he got from the man what he wanted...a second more urgent

request Jesus come and heal his son before he died. Jesus told the man to go home...his son would live. Jesus' word was good enough...the man headed home. Some of the his servants came out to meet him with the good news his son as alive and getting stronger. The Gospel tells us the government official and his whole family believed.

Why did Jesus test the desperate dad in the way he did? Couldn't he have just told the dad his son was healed? Yes, he could have. But the man's persistent plea demonstrated he thought Jesus actually could and would do something to heal his son. He already knew what was in the man's heart...he wanted the man to say what he believed out loud.

We also get tested, especially when we find ourselves in desperate situations, whether it's our job, our health, our family, worrying about the economy, or anything else when we find ourselves at wits end. Jesus wants us to come to him and believe, like the desperate dad, he can and will help us sort things out. We can navigate through those disparate times if we stay focused on Jesus.

In the Epistle, Saint Paul tells us to pray on every occasion and to be persistent in our prayers and to never give up. He tells us to always pray for all of God's people. We do this during the Prayer for the Church in the Mass...in a general way we ask God to help all those who are in "trouble, sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity."

We personalize this in the Intercessions when we pray for people by name...and we pray for those who have no one else to pray for them. Think about what that means! The Intercessions help reinforce our Faith in Jesus who tells us to come to him when cares and worries in our lives begin to weigh us down...so he can lift those burdensome cares and worries.

Miraculous healings occur today just as they did 2000 years ago, for the desperate dad who came to Jesus to ask him, then plead with him, to heal his dying son and making him well again.

Signs and wonders of Jesus happen all the time. Sometimes we just have to take time out from our busy schedules and look for them...and believe.

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