

**XXI TRINITY 2014**  
**SERMON – SAINT JOSEPH PARISH**  
**FATHER CRAIG LOONEY**  
**EPHESIANS 6.10 ST. JOHN 4.46**

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A sick boy...a desperate father...no time to waste...if the boy is to live...the father must get help for his son right away!

Saint John tells us the miracles and wonders of Jesus...especially his healing miracles...are the indisputable proof and conclusive evidence Jesus is both the promised Messiah of the Old Testament and the Son of God of the New Testament.

The Gospel story is compelling because like the first miracle Jesus performed when he changed water into wine at the wedding feast...the action into today's Gospel and the healing of the government official's son took place in Cana...Gentile territory.

A sign of Jesus' compassion for others is his willingness to restore human lives to wholeness regardless of where he is or who is asking for his help. All cries for Jesus' help get answered. He never discriminates because of someone's pedigree.

Let's put ourselves in the position of the father in the Gospel. His son is sick and about to die. It is the worst possible situation a parent could face. He is at his wits end. When all seems hopeless...he hears Jesus is nearby and travels from his home in Capernaum to ask for his help.

When he asks Jesus to come back to Capernaum with him and heal his son, Jesus responds by saying no one will believe unless they see miracles and wonders. Jesus' apparent indifference to the urgency of the matter does not dissuade the man from asking Jesus again...almost insisting...that he come with him immediately. He does not want his son to die and he is not interested in having Jesus prove himself by putting on a magic show.

Instead of going with the man, Jesus tells him to go back to his home in Capernaum...he will find his son alive and getting better. That was all the man needed to hear. Jesus' words of assurance were enough to send him on his way home and before he even arrived some of the people he employed met him...and they all believed in the power of Jesus to heal...miracles and wonders.

Saint Paul tells us we must 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, when we pray in a general way that God will help all those who are in "trouble, sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity."

We do this in a more specific way during the Intercessions at Mass...the time we read the names of people we have been asked to pray for. For many of us this adds a personal touch to the Intercessions. And while we may not know many of the names read...we should make an effort to listen and ask God to heal or help them...whatever their needs.

However, there is a common and unfortunate misunderstanding about prayer. Some people think that the more times we pray for a person or the more often a person's name appears on the Intercessions List, the more likely God will answer our prayers. Worse yet is the idea one person's prayers aren't good enough...the more people that pray the more likely we are to get God's attention. Wrong! Both our individual and corporate prayers have God's full attention!

The Intercessions at Mass and our own personal prayer lives help reinforce our Faith in Jesus who tells us to come to him when the cares and worries in our lives weigh us down so he can lift them. And God always answers prayers; we do sometimes have to be patient and wait for an answer.

A man desperate to have Jesus heal his son came to Jesus for help. He did not back down even when it looked like Jesus was more interested in giving him a lecture on people's lack of faith and unbelief than doing what he said he came to do...to give us life to the fullest.

Let us not forget what Saint Paul tells us. We must be persistent in our prayers...not to get God's attention...we already have that...but because through prayer we begin to experience God's power to heal us and restore order to our lives.

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