

XXI TRINITY 2017

SERMON – SAINT JOSEPH PARISH

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EPHESIANS 6.10 St. JOHN 4.46

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If we're looking for proof Jesus is the real deal...Saint John says we don't have to look any further than the seven miracles and wonders he talks about in the first part of his Gospel:

- Jesus changes water into wine
- Jesus heals the official's son
- Jesus heals a paralyzed man
- Jesus feeds 5000 plus people
- Jesus walks on water
- Jesus heals the man born blind
- Jesus raise Lazarus

These seven miracles and wonders...John states emphatically...are the conclusive evidence Jesus' claims of being the promised Messiah of the Old Testament...and the Son of God of the New Testament...are true!

All seven miracles and wonders include an element of healing...even though the healing might not be obvious to us. When Jesus changed water into wine at the wedding feast in Cana...he set aside the embarrassment of the host when the wine ran out...and kept the reception going. When Jesus walked on water he came to the disciples' boat being tossed around in rough seas...and calmed their fears and the water...proof Jesus (God) has power over nature.

Jesus' specialty is healing...of mind, body and soul. Today's Gospel reading finds Jesus heading back to Cana after celebrating Passover in Jerusalem. A government official from Capernaum heard about Jesus' miracles and desperate to have his sick son healed travels the 20 miles to Cana to ask Jesus for help.

The government official asks Jesus to heal his son who was about to die. Instead of answering the man directly, he tells the crowd no one will believe in him unless they see miracles and wonders...all the people wanted was for Jesus to perform a magic show...even that might not convince them to believe in him.

The father doesn't ask for Jesus to prove himself with a bag of tricks...and pleads with Jesus to come with him before his son dies.

The desperate cries of the father don't fall on deaf ears...Jesus tells the man his son will live. The man takes Jesus at his word and returns home to find his son well...he and his entire household believed in Jesus' power to heal.

Jesus always intended to heal the official's son...what he wanted was for the man to demonstrate his faith without asking Jesus to first perform some magic act...the official wasn't interested in any of that...he believed Jesus was the real deal because of his faith.

Faith compels us to pray for healing...for ourselves and for others...as we do in the Intercessions at Mass. But we must never fall into the trap of thinking the more we pray the more likely God will hear us and take action. He has already heard us and gets the message. He answers all prayers for healing...sometimes we have to be patient for the answer...and sometimes the answer is not what we expected.

We have all experienced miracles and wonders in our personal lives and in the life of Saint Joseph Parish. We should thank God for those miracles and wonders...but we should not demand he perform miracles and wonders to get us to believe in him. That amounts to testing God...something Jesus says is not a very smart thing to do.

The Intercessions at Mass do 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. Remember what Saint Paul tells us...be persistent in our prayers...not to get God's attention...we already have that...but to refocus our attention on him and to trust him.

Miracles and wonders...we shouldn't hesitate to ask God for healing...not because we want him to prove his love for us...but because we love him and know he loves us and wants what's best for us...and our faith is ultimately about trusting God.

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