

XXI TRINITY 2018
SERMON – SAINT JOSEPH PARISH
FATHER CRAIG LOONEY
EPHESIANS 6.10 St. JOHN 4.46



They saw Jesus perform many signs and wonders...they wanted to see more...so they followed him on his trip back to Cana.

Saint John talks about seven signs and wonders...Jesus' miracles...as the definitive and conclusive proof Jesus is both the promised Messiah of the Old Testament, and the Son of God of the New Testament.

Jesus made many signs and wonders happen...he changed water into wine at a wedding reception...he healed a government official son...he healed a paralyzed man...he fed 5000 people...he walked on water...he healed a blind man...he raised Lazarus from the dead.

Today we find Jesus on his way to Cana when he is approached by a government official whose son is sick and near death. He asks Jesus to heal his son. Jesus' response seems strangely out of character...he tells the man no one will ever believe in him unless they see miracles and wonders.

Our desperate dad isn't put off by Jesus' apparent indifference to him or his son's illness. He didn't come to Jesus to see a magic show...he came to him for help...he wants Jesus to heal his sick boy...and he's not going to take no for an answer.

Jesus tells the man to go home...his son will live. The man doesn't ask Jesus for proof...he takes him at his word...and when he gets home...he finds his son has fully recovered...and he and his entire household believe in Jesus' power to heal. Why does Jesus first show indifference? Was he testing the desperate dad?

Jesus began his public ministry in Galilee...Gentile Territory. His first two miracles...the signs and wonders Saint John talks about...took place there. Jesus changed water into wine at a wedding reception...and he healed the government official's son. Jesus is never indifferent to anyone. He extended his healing power beyond his own people. He broke down many barriers and anyone who came to him for help got the help they needed.

What Jesus wanted to hear from the desperate dad is what he already knew was in his heart. He wanted the man to show he really believed Jesus could heal his son by being persistent...and not backing down. Jesus wants us to show the same kind of faith the dad in today's Gospel shows...be persistent when we ask God for things...and don't think he doesn't hear our prayers.

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 do this in a more specific and for many of us a very personal way during the Intercessions.

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. We should never think that because more of us are praying God is more likely to hear our prayers and respond than if just one of us is praying. God hears our individual and collective prayers everywhere and at all times...both have the same affect...we have his attention and he gets the message!

Prayer for healing through the laying-on-of-hands is also available to anyone during Mass or any other time. When the priest lays his hand on a person's head during Mass and asks God to heal that person, it is not a magic show either. We are following Saint James' explicit instructions in his Epistle to do this...asking God in the Name of Jesus to restore that person to full and complete health.

Miraculous healings occur today just as they did 2000 years ago. Medicines that help people live longer and more enjoyable lives are no less miraculous than Jesus telling the desperate dad in the Gospel to go home and find his son well again.

Signs and wonders of Jesus happen all the time. We just have to look for them...and believe.

