

JUNE 26, 2021
Saturday of the 12th Week in OT
Mark 8: 5-17

“SPEAK THE WORD, LORD!”

As we all know Jesus Christ is the Divine Healer. He heals diseases and sickness, solves a lot of problems and troubles, restores mind, body and soul. Our gospel is again an evidence of this power, love and compassion to those who come to Him for anything. A centurion approached and asked the Lord to heal his servant. There are two things here that we can say strange but true. First he is a centurion, a soldier and probably non-Jew. Second, he asked for healing not for himself or any of his family members but for his servant who is paralyzed. His kindness and compassion was evidently manifested because for a person with high position, in a sense, will bother somebody to ask a favor for his servant. He can help but not to work for it or even put time to get in touch with somebody who is a Jew. But one thing was sure on the centurion: he has great faith in Jesus and his humility, mercy and concern to his servant leads him to Jesus.

When Jesus heard his request, “Jesus immediately responds that he will go and cure him. ‘No, no,’ replies the centurion. ‘I am not worthy that you should come to my house. Just say the word and my servant will be healed.’ (Words very familiar to us from their paraphrase used in the prayers before sharing in Communion.) And he goes on to say that as an army officer, he just has to give commands and they are carried out on the spot. When it comes to healing, he knows that Jesus can do the same. Jesus is astonished at the faith of this pagan: ‘Nowhere in Israel have I found faith like this!’ And he foretells that this is a sign of what is going to happen in the future when Gentiles from all over the world will enter the Kingdom while many of Jesus’ own people will be left outside. The faith that Jesus expects is not an acceptance of religious doctrines. It is rather an act of total trust and surrender by which people commit themselves to the power of God – in this case, the power of God in Jesus. Christ asks for this faith especially when he works his miracles, which are not so much acts of mercy

as signs attesting his mission and witnessing to the kingdom; hence he cannot work miracles unless he finds the faith without which the miracles lose their true significance.”¹

My dear sisters and brothers, this is also what Jesus Christ is looking towards us: trust and faith in Him and everything will be in place. When Jesus was in Nazareth, his hometown, He did not perform miracles or healing because of their lack of faith. What is clear in this gospel and the conversation of Jesus to the centurion that faith is essential to obtain healing, granting our request and giving us what we pray for and our needs.

Let us ask our Lady, the Blessed Virgin Mary, who exemplify faith *par excellence*, who trust the Lord by giving herself totally to God that we may never lose this gift of faith which has been offered to us, that our faith may be strengthen and whatever happen, we hold on to Him and only to Him. We know without faith in God, He will be impeded in reaching out His healing love, mercy, forgiveness and affection to us. So, like the centurion and Our Lady, let us say to Jesus: ‘Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof; but only speak the word, and I will be healed.’ Amen.

¹ livingspace.sacredspace.ie