

28th Sunday in O.T. _C

October 12, 2025

St. Edward's Parish

Friends, in the Gospel last week we heard the Apostles beg Jesus, "Increase our faith!". Our Lord

replied that if they had faith the size of a mustard seed, they could say to a mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea'. I proposed then that we take three weeks in a row to consider the virtue of faith in our Mass homilies. Last week we considered what faith is; namely, a supernatural gift that enables us to entrust ourselves to God and believe all that He has revealed, particularly in Jesus Christ and as handed down by the Catholic Church. Today we turn to a second aspect, the power of faith. In the Gospel today, the healing of the ten lepers reveals the power that faith can have for those who approach Jesus.

The New Testament is full of miracles that depend upon faith. Recall how often Jesus says, "Go your faith has saved you (made you well)." A few examples from the Gospel of Luke include a woman healed from an incurable loss of blood when she touched Jesus' cloak. A blind man who cried out to Jesus and asked to see. Finally, the leper who returns to thank Jesus today is told, "Get up and go on your way; your faith has made you well". On the other hand, you may remember the account when Jesus visits his hometown, the Gospel says He could do few deeds of power because of their lack of faith (e.g. Mk 6:6).

Our Lord promised His disciples that if they had faith the size of a mustard seed, they could say to a tree be uprooted and planted in the sea; that is to say they would do things that seem impossible. Do we see this power of faith continue after Jesus? On one hand, yes, we certainly see it following the Resurrection. Throughout the Acts of the Apostles, the early Christians worked powerful deeds by faith in Jesus. As well, the very spread of the Gospel by the preaching of the Apostles is something of a miracle in itself. These simple and mostly uneducated men, many of them fisherman, planted the Christian faith throughout the world without any worldly power, without violent force, and without any worldly gain. After them the Catholic faith has spread to every country, language and culture throughout the world. Furthermore, even up to today, especially

in the lives of the saints, we have seen amazing miracles. For example, consider the miracles in our past century through St. André Bessette at St. Joseph's Oratory in Montreal or through St. Padre Pio. Yet, in our own time and culture, where there has been such a rejection of faith in Christ, it should not surprise us if the Lord does few deeds of power.

So, on one hand, the miraculous power of Christ does continue where there is faith. However, Jesus also points us to something deeper through the healing accounts in Scripture. Take, for example, the ten lepers in today's Gospel. In a profound act of faith and gratitude, one returns to thank Jesus, who says to him, "Get up and go your way your faith has made you well." This can be translated literally as "your faith has saved you." While the other nine were cleansed, this one who thanks Jesus receives something more; his faith has *saved* him. A similar thing is brought to light in the account of a paralyzed man brought to Jesus by his friends. They seek a physical healing, but when Jesus sees their faith, He says to the paralyzed man, "Take heart, your sins are forgiven" (Mt 9:2). Jesus grants the physical healing, but he emphasizes the forgiveness sins. This tells us that the ultimate power of faith lies not merely in physical healing, but in salvation and eternal life. By faith our sins can be forgiven, by faith we can become sons and daughters of God, by faith we can have eternal life. While physical healings are good, they are just temporary, the real power of faith is our salvation. St. Peter emphasizes this in his first letter: "for you are receiving the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls." (1Pt 1:9).

Jesus promises that faith will accomplish seemingly impossible things. This, however, does not only mean miracles of healing or of nature. These do continue today, but Jesus points us to go deeper. Miracles happen for some, not for others (even those who pray with faith). They are not essential. The real power of faith is in salvation and eternal life, and this is open to everyone who believes. Next week will conclude our homily series by considering how we can obtain and preserve this gift of faith.