

Saturday's Gospel: The World Needs our Faith

Gospel for Saturday in the 18th
Week of Ordinary Time, and
commentary.

Gospel (*Mt 17:14-20*)

And when they came to the crowd, a man came up to Jesus and kneeling before him said, “Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is an epileptic and he suffers terribly; for often he falls into the fire, and often into the water. And I brought him to your disciples, and they could not heal him.”

And Jesus answered, “O faithless and perverse generation, how long am I to be with you? How long am I to bear with you? Bring him here to me.” And Jesus rebuked him, and the demon came out of him, and the boy was cured instantly. Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, “Why could we not cast it out?” He said to them, “Because of your little faith. For truly, I say to you, if you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move; and nothing will be impossible to you.”

Commentary

Today's Gospel scene is quite dramatic. A father kneels before Jesus and begs him to heal his demon-possessed son. He had first

asked Jesus' followers to cure him, but their attempt ended in failure. He now turns to the Master, who frees his son from the devil.

Jesus tells his disciples that in order to cast out this demon they needed more faith. To heal the world, to heal hearts, we Christians have to be men and women of faith. For we encounter people trapped in chains that human forces cannot break: deep hatreds, deep-rooted vices, a lack of hope.

Sometimes people close to us are in this situation. We try to do what we can to help them. But often we realize that we can go no further, that we need the action of grace to bring about a special light or a deep conversion. On our part, we can try to foster a deep trust in God, and perhaps pray together so that it is our Lord who heals their wounds.

Prayer filled with strong faith is what holds up the world. Therefore we need to turn to God with perseverance and abandon ourselves in his hands. This prayer that Saint Josemaría recommends can help us: “Lord, You are the same as always. Give me the faith of those men who knew how to respond to your grace and who worked – in your Name – great miracles, true wonders. I know that you will do them. But I also know that you want to be asked, that you want us to seek you, to knock loudly at the doors of your Heart.”

Rodolfo Valdés