

Easter 5 Sunday Year A 200510

Acts 6:1-7; Psalm 33:1 -2,4-5,18-19; I Peter 2:4-9; John 14:1-12

C/W Acts 7:55-60; Psalm 31:1-5; I Peter 2:2-10; John 14:1-14

From our Gospel Reading - Jesus made an astounding promise: Anyone who believes in him "will also do the works that [He does]; *and greater works than these*" (John 14:12).

Such a promise can seem too good, too easy, to be true. Still, there it is, in the word of God, demanding our faith and obedience. Jesus wants to work through us to bring healing and salvation to others. He even calls us to believe that we can perform miracles in his name. How can this be?

The answer lies not in our abilities, but in the presence of the Spirit of Christ in every baptized Christian (John 14:16-17). In the book of Acts, St. Luke gives us story after story of ordinary people like us doing extraordinary things in the name of the Lord. Even back then, at the dawn of the church, Jesus had begun to fulfill his promise and work powerfully through his followers.

Jesus' promise is just as valid today as it was in the early church. There is no evidence to suggest that these promises were only for the biblical Apostolic times. After all we are still in the apostolic times through our bishops who are their successors.

So why don't we hear of more miracles in our present age? Well we do, but the clamour of the world and our various other interests, seem to drown them out! Look into the official, validated and recognised miracles at the shrine of our Lady of Lourdes.

In a wonderful two volume book called "Miracles", the acclaimed Protestant scholar Prof Craig S. Keener has researched and developed a fantastic account of miracles, ancient and modern. He has also quoted selectively from the early Church Fathers and also John Wesley's 18th-century experiences.

In a post script, Prof Keener writes that "miracles will not eradicate (all) human suffering; miracles do not *always* occur. The physical benefits that they confer when they do occur are necessarily temporary but in the context of the Gospels' theology, are also signs of ... *the Eternal Kingdom for all who hope in Jesus.*

By the power of the Holy Spirit dwelling within us, we can minister the divine love that filled Jesus' heart as he taught and cared for people during his earthly life. We can bring his healing touch to the sick, the lonely, and the broken hearted.

Such a statement stretches our faith, but the question is, "Is it beyond the power of God in me to cure blind eyes, open deaf ears, and raise the dead?" We are not all called to do all these things, but some are.

But all of us have to ask ourselves, are we offering to "do the works of the Lord which he has called me to". It is our task and privilege to proclaim the Gospel by our lives!

Are we going to say, “I can’t do that”, or “I’ve done my share”, or “someone else would be better at it”? Are we going to spend time discussing trivia? Or are we going to spend our time for the Lord, going out, healing, loving, proclaiming the Gospel.

The only qualification we need is a burning love for the Lord and a desire to convey that love to our parish and world.

It is not about sitting on committees, endless meetings and the like, but going out, working for the Lord in His Vineyard. The Holy Dusters, the floor cleaners and everyone in our congregation – is MORE – important than the priests, the bishops and so on!

In this Easter season, try taking Jesus at his word. Explore getting involved in the works of prayer, evangelization, and outreach in the parish. Help relieve some of your colleague’s burdens as you take up your own role as a minister of Jesus Christ. Admittedly during this pandemic, this is difficult. But our greatest miracle is prayer!

Pray with, or at least for, the sick and dying. Things will get better, Feed the poor. Intercede for the lost. Teach the parish's youth about Jesus. Comfort the bereaved. Call on the Holy Spirit to come in power in every situation. Don't let unbelief or doubts place limits on what the Lord can do through you.

So let us aim to go out into our parish and the world in mission and evangelism, in love and the Power of the Spirit. ***“The one who believes in me will also do the works that I do; and in fact, do greater works than these!!”***