

15th March 2021 Monday, 4th Week of Lent

Gospel: John 4:43-54

Today's Gospel is probably the same incident as recorded in Matthew's and Luke's Gospels, only there it is a centurion asking for healing for his servant. The point is, that it shows that faith in Jesus is not limited to the Jews, but those "outside" Israel can come to faith in Christ too.

The whole of John's Gospel is very structured and instead of the many miracles in the other three Gospels, John focusses on seven individual miracles, calling them "signs". Each sign reveals Jesus' work of our salvation a bit more. The first sign was the changing of the Jewish purification water into wine at the wedding feast at Cana (Jn. 2:1-12) which revealed Jesus as the one who would cleanse us by His Body and Blood and unite us to Himself in the Eucharist (as a bride and groom are united in marriage).

The healing of the servant/son of the gentile is a sign that above all, that Jesus is the source of life, a point already made in the prologue of John's Gospel, "In Him was life and that life was the light of men" (Jn. 1:4), and that would be made later when Jesus says, "I am the way, the truth and the life" (Jn. 14:6). As Fr Naz said that the beginning of Lent, it can seem as if Lent last year never stopped, that we are still in that place of fasting and restrictions which began a year ago. Jesus is the true life and each day we can ask Him to give us fresh hope of a life beyond the present "fasting" from family and friends.

Another point that we can take from today's Gospel is that Jesus did not come just for a select group of people. He came for all. He did not just come for us who go to Church (or watch online if we are shielding), but for every single person who is born. It's very easy to get stuck in our little church bubble, but a part of our mandate as baptised persons is to pass on the light and life of Christ to other people. The gentile in today's Gospel heard about Jesus and had the "audacity" to ask for healing. Do we have the audacity to talk to people outside our faith bubble about our hope in Jesus? In Baptism we received a lit candle which is a sign of the light and life of Christ in us. At the Baptism of infants too young to hold the candle, it is given to the parents and godparents as a sign of handing on the faith to the child as he/she grows.

Let us pray:

Heavenly Father, we ask you to give us opportunities to speak to people about our faith in your Son Jesus Christ, and may the grace of the Holy Spirit give us the right words at these times. Amen