Tr.21(2022)

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

We are in the Octave of All Saints which was last Tuesday. Then on Wednesday was the feast of All Souls. All **Souls** is the date to commemorate all the faithful departed, especially of the previous year. It got started at the famous Benedictine abbey of Cluny in southern-eastern France just before the end of the first millennium. All **Saints** on the other hand goes way back to the late 3rd Century when it was called, **All Martyrs**. (And there were plenty of them back then.)

In the early 600s the Pope dedicated the pagan Pantheon in Rome to Mary and all the church's martyrs. Then a century later **All Saints** appeared on the Western church's calendar. About two centuries later it appeared on the Eastern church's calendar. They celebrate it on the date we commemorate Trinity Sunday.

As we probably learned in Sunday school, the Church **declares** someone a saint, but does not MAKE one a saint. All souls in heaven are saints, whether the Church on earth knows about them at **all** or not. Saints simply are those who have “completed” the process of “sanctification”, or becoming holy, although many, such as Mother Teresa, moved farther along that process during their lives than most clergy including your pastor.

*“...a certain nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum. When he heard that Jesus was...into Galilee, he went unto him, and besought him....”*Jn.

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Jesus had returned from Judea into his own area, namely Galilee, the area of His childhood in Nazareth and of his adopted hometown of Capernaum. The Gospel says that he had returned to Cana where he had turned water into wine, about 20 miles from Capernaum.

Now the King James says that a “certain nobleman” came to him. Other translations say, an “official”, and still others say, a “courtier”. In the Greek the word used was “Basilikos” which is helpful because that term was used for a **royal** official, which is more specific than the other translations. In today's language he was most definitely a “muckety muck”, a very important person.

This nobleman had come personally to Jesus to ask his help. He had not sent someone else, a “flunky” or “gopher”, to bring Jesus to Capernaum. The sick person was his son and so the nobleman obviously was in a hurry, and not taking any chances on his request getting done incorrectly or slowly.

But, the nobleman still was definitely taking huge chances. He had to entertain the possibility that Jesus might refuse to help him. He might have had pressing business that he needed to reschedule and, thus, explain himself. As someone occasioned to the palace of Herod he easily could have feared ridicule within his power circle for being “batty” enough to rush 20 miles **each** way on foot to seek the help of a simple **carpenter** for his... sick son.

No doubt anyone of his acquaintance who heard of his sudden journey would have regarded the trip as a complete waste of time also. We need to remember once again that the Jews believed that sickness was caused by sin. Thus everyone would have assumed that his son's health stood no chance of improving until the sin, of the son or perhaps even of the nobleman **himself** had been forgiven. Others would have thought simply, “why not save time and make the appropriate atonement” to God and forget all the rush, the sweat, the embarrassment and silliness from going to see a carpenter about a health issue?

The nobleman obviously had more than a little faith that Jesus could help his son since he risked so much embarrassment, and employed so much personal energy. Indeed, we also see this in the fact that after Jesus simply told him that his prayer had been answered that the nobleman returned home alone without grumbling about Christ NOT coming along. But, it also is important to note that the nobleman's faith was not perfect since he believed that Jesus, who created the universe, needed to be present personally to cause the healing.

Thus, we see a man, a very important man, whose faith, while not perfect, was strong enough to enable him to swallow his pride and come to Jesus beseeching, not just asking, but pleading for him to help his sick son recover. He was rewarded with a miracle, a long distance one at that, which, we should also note, manifested Jesus' power as divine to bring good immediately wherever it is needed.

In our daily lives we frequently find that we need help, but we also often think, “what's the use”?! As adults we become so used to solving problems that we believe that if we can not solve it, or our money can not solve it, that it is hopeless.

We also worry what others may think of us if we are seen asking for help. Will I be perceived as weak? Do we ourselves want to risk being perceived as “batty” for believing that God can help us? It certainly can be uncomfortable to be seen, for example, at work praying about anything. One does not want to be viewed as “one of those religious nuts!”, especially if we think some of our colleagues are nonbelievers.

Yet, this nobleman, a courtier, a royal official, risked potentially everything he had, including his reputation and perhaps even his livelihood to seek help from a “trouble maker”. He was rewarded with what he sought, although not in the precise way or manner that he had hoped.

The nobleman thus demonstrated the correct **ATTITUDE** one should have in seeking some particular help from the Lord. First, one has to have faith that Jesus at least can do something. That He anyway, can help, and will help. It is totally fine if we tell him, "Lord, I just don't know what to do; I trust you though". We need not worry or be anxious that our faith is imperfect as the devil wants us to do. This nobleman's, St. Luke, and even the Apostles had imperfect faith. Our Lord was want to tell them, "O ye of little faith".

Secondly, one has to swallow his pride and risk possible embarrassment from others, as well as recognize that our prayer might not be answered right away or the way we want. Third and finally, we must actually ASK. Needless to say, this last does not have to be actually spoken, but it is critical to put away our notions of...self sufficiency. If we have the correct attitude in our praying, that of faith in God and humility about ourselves, we should be confident that our prayer not only will be heard, but also ultimately answered.

AMEN. +