



On a sabbath Jesus went to dine at the home of one of the leading Pharisees, and the people there were observing him carefully. In front of him there was a man suffering from dropsy. Jesus spoke to the scholars of the law and Pharisees in reply, asking, "Is it lawful to cure on the sabbath or not?" But they kept silent; so he took the man and, after he had healed him, dismissed him. Then he said to them, "Who among you, if your son or ox falls into a cistern, would not immediately pull him out on the sabbath day?" But they were unable to answer his question.

**Introductory Prayer:** Lord, I believe in you with a faith that never seeks to test you. I trust in you, hoping to learn to accept and follow your will, even when it does not make sense to the way that I see things. May my love for you and those around me be similar to the love you have shown to me.

**Petition:** Lord, may I be a witness to you in the face of a world that often does not care.

**1. And They Watched Him:** The Lord knows the thoughts of these men. With his question, he makes public their foolishness: God blesses on the seventh day, while they prevent good works on that day. It would seem that a day that does not allow the doing of good works is accursed. Let us be sure always to seek the will of God in our lives, so that we might use every minute of every day for the glory of God.

**2. They Kept Silent:** The man with dropsy does not ask to be healed, perhaps out of fear of the watching Pharisees, yet Christ knows what he desires in his heart. Jesus is

not concerned that this good work might scandalize the Pharisees; he is concerned about doing good. The Pharisees keep silent because they know that Jesus will give this man something they don't have – their hearts have become closed to the man. We need to desire good for everyone. A sign that our hearts are becoming hardened to Our Lord, perhaps like the Pharisees, is when we begrudge the good that befalls others or even wish others harm. When we are mindful that we are beggars before God, it's much easier to be merciful with others.

**3. Keep Your Eyes on Christ:** In this Gospel passage, both the Pharisees and the man suffering from dropsy are looking at Christ. The Pharisees look at Christ with skepticism that will not be overcome by any miracle; the suffering man looks at Christ with the eyes of his heart. This man desires something that only Christ can give him, and Christ will not be outdone in generosity. We don't know what becomes of this man. We can only imagine the great testimony he gives to all about Christ and how he cured him, even under the scrutiny of the Pharisees. As Pope Saint John Paul II told us so many times, "Do not be afraid!"

**Conversation with Christ:** Lord, help me to see with the eyes of faith all that you do in my life, especially when I don't understand why you are doing it. Help me to witness to others all that you have done for me and my family. May I never take for granted the graces that you give me.

**Resolution:** I will say a prayer today for someone I know who has not opened his heart to Christ because of lack of faith or skepticism. Through my prayers and example, may I once again try to bring Christ into that person's heart.