



Holy Gospel of Jesus Christ according to Saint Matthew 17: 14-20.

A man came up to Jesus, knelt down before him, and said, "Lord, have pity on my son, who is a lunatic and suffers severely; often he falls into fire, and often into water. I brought him to your disciples, but they could not cure him." Jesus said in reply, "O faithless and perverse generation, how long will I be with you? How long will I endure you? Bring the boy here to me." Jesus rebuked him and the demon came out of him, and from that hour the boy was cured. Then the disciples approached Jesus in private and said, "Why could we not drive it out?" He said to them, "Because of your little faith. Amen, I say to you, if you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you."

Introductory Prayer:

Lord Jesus, I believe you want me to have faith in you, faith that hearkens to your words without any second guessing. I hope in your words, not relying solely on my own strength or reasoning. I love you. You continue to astonish me by showing me that your ways are not my ways.

Petition:

Lord, give me the grace to trust you.

1. Never a Dull Moment:

Just before this event, the apostles were with Christ at the Transfiguration. Have you ever come out of a retreat on fire to change the world, and then the unexpected cross comes your way – a negative comment, a temptation you have not had before, a tragedy in the family? You were in the clouds surrounded by God's glory, and then you came crashing down to the reality of this world. Let the moments of glory be your strength to face and persevere through all the challenges that lie ahead. We have to be strong. We have to keep moving ahead even though we seem to have bullets flying by our heads, as do soldiers in war. We have to have faith.

2. Genuine Faith:

The apostles go out and think they can cure people, but they forget the secret ingredient – faith. It is not the apostles who are doing the work; it is God working through them. Could it be that they had forgotten this fact and fell into presumption? How often do we have a great time at prayer, only to walk out the door and return to our self-centeredness? We have no power aside from Christ. Put your faith into action. Make sure your actions are done with Christ and through Christ.

3. Looking Back:

Let's move forward to the time when Peter looked back on all these occurrences and realized how patient our Lord had been with him. He also saw Christ's merciful love to all people. Do I find daily nourishment in seeing how patient and merciful our Lord is? Do I often lose my cool and get anxious simply because I do not know how to deal with others' faults or with people who clash with me? Is it tough for me when people do not see the obvious? Am I short tempered with others, not dealing well with their shortcomings and failures? Turn to Christ. Look at him, see his simple smile and recall how long he waited for you to look him in the eyes and change your ways.

Conversation with Christ:

Lord Jesus, you always had your hand stretched out to me, but often I used my hands for my own endeavors. Take me by the hand now, and lead me where you want me to go.

Resolution:

Today when I go to prayer, I will look back on the road traveled thus far and be grateful.