

March 31, 2025

Daily Reflections

Journeying through Lent



Center for Spiritual Development

FAITH AND PROMISES

By Robert Choiniere

An Excerpt from Today's Gospel

*The royal official said to him,
"Sir, come down before my child dies."
Jesus said to him, "You may go; your son will live."
The man believed what Jesus said to him and left.
While the man was on his way back,
his slaves met him and told him that his boy would live.
He asked them when he began to recover.
They told him,
"The fever left him yesterday, about one in the afternoon."
The father realized that just at that time Jesus had said to him,
"Your son will live,"
and he and his whole household came to believe.*

JOHN 4:49-53

Reflection

Today the Prophet Isaiah shares a bit of the wondrous dream and promise of God. This dream is truly awesome, beyond anything we could hope for in this world. God promises that crying will end, infant mortality will cease, no one will die young, and no one will be pushed out of their home or land. It is so grand that it seems incredible, especially when one considers the reality of our world -- especially in the Holy Land, which seems so far from the joy, rejoicing and happiness that God promises. It truly seems impossible that such a world could emerge and that all suffering could be annihilated when the reality appears that it is only getting worse. Is this simply a fantasy? Is God a delusional dreamer just telling us what we want to hear so that we will bear with our suffering one more day, hanging onto the improbable hope that “the sun will come out tomorrow?” Is God to be believed?

This is the exact question that Jesus takes up in John’s gospel. Jesus returns to Cana, where he had performed his first miracle after being run out of his hometown. He is becoming known, which leads this royal official to come to him in desperation to heal his dying son. Jesus uses this occasion to talk more broadly about the lack of faith and trust, putting this man and all of us on the spot. Do we truly believe that God will care for us, that God has our best intentions in mind -- and even that God can bring healing and restoration? Do we trust that God can really make all things new, or is God just a last ditch effort once we have exhausted everything else? Desperation is not real faith or trust.

In the end, Jesus offers the official a promise, yet it is up to him (and us) to believe it or not. “Your son will live.” It was not an immediate healing. There was no confirmation when he left Jesus, yet the Gospel said he still believed. He walked home not knowing, but still believing. This kind of trust is the root of true biblical faith to which Jesus is calling us all. Belief is not about an assent of the mind, but a deep trust that God will change our weeping into dancing and bring new light ... despite every sign to the contrary.



For Pondering

- What holds you back from fully trusting in the promises of God for our world and for your life?
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For Prayer

*Lord,
In moments of doubt and uncertainty, I turn to You,
just as the royal official in Cana.
Lord, help me trust in Your Word and Your timing,
even when answers seem far off.
Just as Jesus spoke and the official believed,
give me the faith to trust that You are working, even when I cannot see it.
Strengthen my heart to believe in Your power and Your love,*

*knowing that You are always with me, guiding me to what is good.
Amen.*

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