

October 25 2015

Wouldn't you loved to have witnessed Jesus' miracles such enabling the blind see such as Bartimaeus or turning water into wine, healing the sick, enabling the lame to walk, casting out demons, raising people from the dead, calming storms, walking on water, enabling the deaf hear and the creation and gift of the Mass, to name just a few.

If you had to choose, which was your favorite miracle done by Jesus?

If you could perform one of them, which would you choose? Why?

If we would ask the parents of a teenager they might ask to enable their teen to see and think clearly in making good decisions.....

If we would ask a father whose child was near death, he would most likely choose to heal his daughter.....

Imagine asking students on a college campus the same question, many might choose making water into wine.....

Though miracles may be radically unusual in their nature, we should not be surprised that they are a central focus of Jesus' ministry. You might even say ordinary!

The miracles he performed spoke volumes as to who he was, yet were in many respects were very ordinary.

They were simple and to the point, practical like his teachings such as loving someone who is unlovable..... Such as the calling and the change of heart of St. Matthew the tax collector to be an apostle.

They were of real service to humanity, not always spectacular.

They required no great effort; but simply were an extension of who Jesus was and whom he called us to be. His miracles were never performed for attention, nor were they for need of ego.

In most of his miracles, forgiving sins was his most radical and life giving act of compassion.

It is a miracle that he forgives our sins even though he knows we will sin again and again and again.

Would you forgive someone if you knew he was going to do it again?

It is so easy to pass off the miracles as distant in place and in time, yet those miracles still occur here and now in our midst.

Jesus calls each one of us to be a worker of miracles. He reaches out to us to share the miracle of his everlasting love with others.

It seems that Jesus always looked around where he was and then seeks out the person most in pain or most in need. Do we?

The Gospels invite all of us to do the small things for others with great love.

To those who receive it can be quite miraculous at times.

Think of all of the prayers that people pray every day. Only a very small number of those prayers require God's direct intervention or involvement.

Ordinary people like you and I can answer most prayers, if we would just learn to recognize people's needs and pain, and be willing to respond.

There are so many prayers, that God wants us to answer them!

Too many prayers go unanswered because ordinary people like you and me don't allow the Holy Spirit to guide us in answering them.

Today more than ever, we need modern day St. Veronicas to wipe the face of Jesus found throughout much of humanity so that they all may see.....

Some ten years ago I was invited to be part of a "Mission trip" to work with orphanages in Cochabamba, Bolivia.

We originally thought we would clean, paint, repair or build something while there.

Quickly my group was redirected as to the purpose of our mission trip by those in Bolivia, one of the poorest nations in Latin America.

While we were a bit taken back, we soon realized that those involved in organizing the trip had been asked that we come down and just observe the needs they have there.

They wanted us bring back their needs to our local faith communities here in the USA, and hopefully provide the financial means to get projects done by employing local people with dignified work supporting their families.

It made sense.

That strategy worked, as school rooms were soon added to a school, orphanage grounds were fenced in, and a barn roof repaired. It was a miracle to them.

While there, we toured several orphan facilities, one of which we heard God attempting to get our attention.

While there we were able to meet summer volunteers from a high school in Houston Texas, who were there for four weeks, just helping to care for over 85 young children , some of which were profoundly handicapped some afflicted with Fetal Alcohol syndrome.

They held those babies and rocked them for hours at a time..... This was their summer!

For those babies it was miraculous to just be held.

There was a Dutch couple in their mid-forties who were there to adopt a young 4 year old girl. Under Bolivian law they had to work with and care for the girl for 6 weeks in order to determine if it was the right relationship, and for the authorities to determine if the prospective parents would be good for the child.

While there, they had also bonded with another handicapped child whose eyes were terribly crossed and in need of surgery of which the poor could never afford, especially an orphanage in Bolivia.

We found out that they had decided to adopt that second child near the end of their six week stay and now faced six more weeks in preparation in order to adopt.

This heroic couple had to split as the husband had to go back to work and faced a quirk in Dutch law which prohibits adoption by any one 45 and older.

He was to turn 45 as soon as he returned to Holland. Only the wife was allowed to legally adopt the second girl.

They were committed none the less to heroically go forward with the adoptions.

I believe to this day we all saw the face of Christ and heard his healing words by being in the company of that couple and those young teens who brought the miraculous to those Bolivian children.

They changed forever how we would observe the needs of the poor and those in need of healing.

Brothers and sisters, Jesus promised the following, “The one who believes in me will also do the works that I do, in fact, will do greater works than these.” (Jn 14:12)

We are all called to be miracle workers!

Whose prayer are you going answer today?

Amen!

JMJ