

‘The healing of the Paralytic of Jerusalem’ by His Eminence Archbishop Serafim Of the Greek Orthodox Archbishopric of Zimbabwe



By His Eminence Archbishop Serafim

Of the Greek Orthodox Archbishopric of Zimbabwe

In today's Gospel extract, our Church refers to one of the important miracles of Christ, the healing of the Paralytic of Jerusalem.

The important issues, which are associated with this miracle, are as follows:

Firstly, the Paralytic does not have anybody to push him into the pool in order to be healed. It is truly grievous for someone who is suffering not to have someone to take care of him. This is why Christ told us that when we take care of and help a person who is without any help and is in need of our assistance, it is as if we serve Him and in this way we become worthy of the heavenly kingdom.

It seems that sometimes we must be deprived of something so that we can

appreciate it. So, instead of thanking God for the people that we have next to us in the family, in the work place, in our social dealings, even in Church, we disappoint them, we upset them, we make them ill and when suddenly that someone departs prematurely from our circle, then we indeed begin to cry for him and to honor him with an impressive marble Cross on his grave. This is hypocrisy. We must show our respect and our love to the persons we love making an effort not to upset them nor to disappoint them.

Every time we want to do something as individuals, we must consider what is good for our family and every family should ponder what is good for the broader society. Whatever is good for the family is also good for the persons who constitute it. And whatever is good for our society is also good for the families which constitute it.

By giving priority to the common good, we protect ourselves as much as our families and the broader society in which we live. When this does not happen, social injustices are encouraged; poverty exists as well as unemployment, crime, dangerous illnesses and generally a lack of security and an absence of respect for life itself as a gift from God, which no one has a right to harm.

As we are in the middle of the pandemic of coronavirus we should show solidarity each other, assisting each other providing support and sharing food with the ones they have not anything to eat.

A second important issue which is associated with the miracle of the Paralytic in today's Gospel extract, is that the perpetration of sin, as a result of wrong choices made by man, brings upon himself health problems, pain and misfortune and finally death.

The worst thing however is that with the perpetration of sin, a person does not only harm himself, he also harms his family and the broader society.

So, our deeds as individuals have a social character. If our deeds and life are just and right we protect ourselves and our family and the broader society.

Consequently, our deeds and the quality of our life influence the world in which we live.

Our indifference to society's social problems like poverty, unemployment, crime and aids is as if we participate in their becoming worse. Our attitude must be dynamic. Firstly with our prayers for God to enlighten us how to help and then, with God's help and the spiritual guidance of our clergy, we must try to participate in their solution. That which we can do today, let us not leave for tomorrow.

Before we ourselves become victims of the great social problems which the broader society in which we live faces, we must react with trust and confidence in the pastoral directions of our Church, supporting its pastoral, catechetical, didactic, philanthropic and missionary work. Especially today we should give priority of supporting people suffering of the Pandemic of Coronavirus.

Also never to forget our pastoral responsibility trusted by God to look after our Planet, protecting the Humanity and to be very sensitive on problems on Climate Change crisis, like pollution and lack of protecting each other. The pandemic of coronavirus is an opportunity to start a new era giving priority to green economy, jobs for all the people and production without pollution and poor people and immigrants and refugee and conflicts.

Christ's instigation towards the Paralytic in the Gospel "see, you are well again. Stop sinning or something worse may happen to you". (John 5:14) applies to all of us.

It is an open invitation to each one of us so that we might live in a better world with security and love and justice which lead to us to the Heavenly Kingdom.

A third important issue which is associated with the miracle of the Paralytic of today's Gospel extract, is the vivid witness which the cured Paralytic henceforth gives concerning Jesus Christ's Divinity so that he himself can contribute resolutely in the salvation of other people.

Therefore, in whatever his fellow human beings failed to do for him for 38 years, to push him into the pool of Jerusalem so that might be healed, he without holding any malice against anyone, tries to help his fellow human beings to be saved.

Hence, the thought that no one did anything for me and so why should I concern myself with the problems of others, is an erroneous thought which freezes our love and our responsibility to help our fellow human beings whose problems finally come as a torrential flood which drowns us.

Therefore, the social problems of poverty, unemployment, crime and aids

henceforth also threaten our peaceful life.

Finally, the miracle of the Paralytic is associated with today's Gospel extract. Miracles performed by Christ can also be performed by those who follow him consistently in their lives, as happened with His holy disciples as in the circumstance that follows today's Gospel extract when the Apostle Paul heals Anias and Tabitha.

Similar miracles were performed by the Saints of our Church. We can also live similar miracles with our daily prayers to Christ and when we live according to the Divine Commandments, when our life is holy, like the lives of the Holy Apostles and those of the Saints of our Church

[Source](#)