

Commentary on the Gospel for Mon, Sep 16th 2013

The first and second readings are calls for us to keep praying during the good and difficult times. We should offer thanksgiving and pray for a quiet life of devotion and dignity in Jesus' name. When I reflected upon the content of my prayers, I found that it seemed easier for me to pray during difficult times, when family, friends, and acquaintances needed help. When I was a young girl, I used to have a "secret symbol" with God: we had made a "pact" that whenever I would do the sign of the cross, this would mean that I was thankful for everything that he had given me.

I kept adding things that I was grateful for, which seemed to prolong my prayers. Perhaps I should resurrect this "pact." Luke's Gospel tells the story of a centurion whose servant is gravely ill. The story is about the centurion's faith, a Gentile who cherishes the Jewish nation. His friends pleaded with Jesus that he did not need to trouble to come to his house because "I am not worthy to have you enter under my roof." At that time it was considered unclean for a Jew to enter the house of a Gentile.

Luke describes that Jesus "was amazed" at his faith sharing with the crowd of followers: "I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such faith." Thanks to the centurion's faith, his servant was healed. The story is a powerful reminder that we may be judged by the strength of our faith. This is a struggle for me. I wish I could say that I never doubt, that I have answers. However, I do not have clear answers to any of my questions. In fact, I probably ask too many questions and I often try to answer the questions scientifically. But faith cannot be explained by science.

They are two different things. I have a thirst to know and understand what faith is, but at the same time, I don't necessarily trust what I perceive. Sometimes I think that it would be easier to know and believe. Perhaps this unshakable belief comes with old age? Perhaps it comes with trying harder? Perhaps it comes with more prayers? I will keep working at my personal journey.

This journey may be filled with frustration and despair or it may be filled with hope and excitement. Today, I pray for the Lord's guidance. May he direct and protect us all on our personal journeys. I also pray that he helps me strengthen my faith. I am deeply thankful for all the gifts he has provided my family and me.

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