

24th Monday of Ordinary Time. 9/13/2021

Receiving Jesus in Humility

Jesus was amazed at the centurion. We don't hear this often. It is usually others who are amazed at the words and actions of Jesus. Who is this man? A centurion is a commander of 100 soldiers, so he has significant worldly power. But this man has used his position and resources to be a force for good. He built the synagogue for the Jews in Capernaum, and he maintains good relationships with the Jews, even though he is a foreigner and he represents the dominion of the Roman empire over Israel.

The faith and humility of this man is unexpected, and it moves Jesus. Humility means recognizing reality and acting in accordance with it. The centurion is aware of his

condition as a pagan, and he knows that a Jew entering his home would become impure, so he does not ask for this.

More than that, he sees the difference between temporal and divine authority. He bends his knee in recognition of the divine authority of Jesus and his true dominion over the world, his complete control over all forces of nature.

He makes a request to Jesus, who is the one with real power, interceding for the health of his slave.

We remember the centurion in this Mass, and in every Mass, as we prepare to come in communion with Christ and say, "Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed."

Our condition is different than that of the centurion, because in our baptism we have been made children of God. But in humility we also recognize that our sin has separated us from him and spoiled our soul. And in faith we recognize his authority and his love, his healing power, and his infinite mercy.

Let us come to Jesus and receive him in this communion service, grateful because he nourishes us, he heals us, and he makes us worthy to be with him in this life and in the next.