

## Commentary on the Gospel for Wed, Mar 13th 2024

### For the greater glory of God

Today's Gospel follows immediately on yesterday's story of the healing of the disabled man by the pool. That passage ended with the words: "The Jews began to persecute Jesus because he did the healing on a sabbath." As with some other sabbath healings, we might point out that there was absolutely no urgency to do the healing on a sabbath for someone who had waited 38 years. It is just another indication of the divine authority with which Jesus works. So Jesus' reply is direct and unapologetic: "My Father is at work until now, so I am at work."

John wants to clarify to his community the Mission of Jesus in their lives – that is, Jesus alone can restore the health of the ailing Israel. It is not just through one's adherence to the Jewish law and traditions but through the stirring waters of baptism that we are healed and given new life.

Jesus tells us in this Gospel that he does not do anything alone. He always keeps his Father as the point of reference for all that he does. Christ's life is not self-referential but reflects the desires of the Father. Just as a son looks to his dad to learn how to live, asking "why" and "how," Christ looked to his Father before acting. We are called to imitate Jesus' submissiveness and love of the Father by living for Christ above all things. "And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him" (Colossians 3:17).

We live in a world where being popular is the catchword. We are encouraged to put ourselves ahead, make a name for ourselves, and get noticed—even to the point of becoming someone we're not. The act of healing on a Sabbath day makes Jesus noticed, and his popularity is skyrocketing. And that disturbs the Jewish authorities. Perhaps they are not so much offended at the act of healing itself, but they are furious for the popularity he has gained. All that Christ does is to honour his Father. Even his final sacrifice on the Cross was for us, yes, but also to give glory to his Father. Does our popularity bring glory to God or are we glorifying ourselves?

Let us resolve that, by the grace of God we will take some time today to spend with the Father, asking for the grace to do our tasks for His glory.

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