

Faith AND Works

I. Crossing back into Israelite territory and on the road between the towns, the Lord had the opportunity to be alone with the closest disciples and ask a very important question for him. He really wasn't interested in what **other** people *thought*. He wanted to know what **they** *believed*. When he got the answer, he knew now was the time to tell the Apostles what that meant for *him* and for *them*. It didn't sound like a very good plan to them. Peter spoke, thinking of the Messiah in the human hopes as a conqueror king who would overthrow the Romans and restore Israel to glory. The description the Lord gave about suffering and death was not what the twelve had in mind. They closed their ears and didn't hear the part about "and rise after three days."

II. Several times along *our* journey through life, the Lord asks the same question of us. Some days we can answer quickly, "You are the Son of God"; on other days, "Hmm, I'm not sure," might be more accurate. As we remember the terrible events of September eleventh - along with the hurricanes, earthquakes and fires of the present - some doubts about where God is often surface. What is the meaning of moments like these? How is this part of God's plan? But when we reflect on the amazing actions of first responders and ordinary people, faith and courage are clearly evident. Even in times of doubt, our works, our actions can still show forth the presence of the Lord. There is talk of making a saint of Fr. Mychal Judge, a Franciscan priest who lost his life helping others after the towers crashed. There

were many saints that day. And others during the earthquakes, fires and hurricanes. There is room for doubt but at the same time, also faith.

Concl. Like all of us, Mother Teresa had doubts some days, but continued her work with the poor and sick in the slums of Calcutta. She knew the works she did showed the presence of God to people even as she struggled to find him herself. A good list of works that show faith in action is called the Corporal Works of mercy: feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, give shelter to the homeless, visit the sick and prisoners and bury the dead. The apostle James wrote that just wishing others well and hoping they find food, shelter and

justice, is not enough. Faith must be active, must show the works of God, accomplishing these things.

One way we can answer the question of, “Who do you say I am?” is by *having* faith in him as the Son of God and *doing* the works.

Fr. Michael Pendergraft

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