

Rev. Paul A. Hottinger

Beginning with Healing Fifth Week in Ordinary Time Monday, February 10, 2014
8:15 AM 1 Kgs 8:1-7, 9-13; **Mk 6:53-56** St. Scholastica, virgin (Where would the Spirit take us if we were open to whatever the Spirit wanted?)

Today we have a small insight into Jesus' extensive healing ministry, which is prominent in the beginning of his public ministry. We are reading here Mark, chapter 6. Gradually the healing ministry of Jesus dissipates somewhat as he becomes embroiled in all kinds of controversies, as he begins teaching more specifically about what God really is all about and what God really is looking for in people, and so on. But his introduction—**his introduction—to the people is as a healer. It's very clear that he heals everyone brought to him.**

Now this is not to say that everyone brought to him who is healed then becomes his disciple. That is not being said. But **presumably anyone who is healed would have a good opinion of him.**

The Church is to carry on the work of Christ. It cannot make a disciple of every soul in the entire world. Jesus commissions the Church to "make disciples of all nations," but **surely not every individual will be suitable or able to be a disciple.** But surely there should be no nation, no country, no place where the gospel is not heard, where it is not possible for people to come forth. But **what is the calling card that Jesus himself used? It was the healing ministry.** This is not the essence of Jesus' work, but it's the beginning of it. And it needs to be the beginning of the Church's work as well. **How do we prepare the way for the gospel? By bringing healing to people.**

Now if the Church were not equipped to do this, then the Church would not be equipped to make disciples of all nations, another way of saying **the Church is equipped to do this.** We as God's people are **called to be a healing people.** Our communities ought to be places where people can come for wholeness. Does this necessarily mean miracles every day? I don't think that necessarily has to be said, although I don't think we should exclude the possibility of **miraculous healings.** Why should we? They exist. They exist **where people are especially open to God, to God's graces.** Maybe we have become too cynical, too matter of fact, too accepting of disease and disorder, and we don't really sense the beauty and the power and the health and the strength and the energy that God bestows in his Holy Spirit. **Where would the Spirit take us if we were open to whatever the Spirit wanted?**