

Moving Mountains Eighteenth Week in Ordinary Time Saturday, August 11, 2018
8:15 AM Hb 1:12—2:4; **Mt 17:14-20** St. Clare, virgin (We have to continue to learn, but we also have to pray for this powerful gift of faith that will enable us to confront the mountains of problems that surely are in the path, you might say, of life.)

“Amen, I say to you, if you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move.”

Well two things have to be said about this statement. First of all, **the faith in question is not the ordinary faith of the faithful. This is a charism, a gift.** The disciples didn't have it, not then, probably not ever. Some might have. Secondly, it can't be taken literally in the sense that you are actually going to move a physical mountain, but **there is a kind of faith that will move real mountains of trouble**, and I've seen it. But I wouldn't say it's very common. **It is a sort of faith that we need to pray for**, and it is the type of faith that we need to be careful of, because **once we start moving mountains, well, all kinds of other things happen.** But in general, what is going on here is the fact that **Jesus empowers his disciples to bring healing to people, and the fundamental will of God is to bring healing to people.**

Now ordinarily in modern science, in modern medicine, in order for a doctor or a group of doctors to bring healing, they have to have **a good diagnosis.** This is where things get rather touchy in regard to Jesus' disciples. **Jesus seemed to be able to diagnose with a sudden insight and speak with one word bringing about healing and wholeness.** His disciples didn't have this particular ability. They were sent out and at times they were very pleased with the results and other times they were not. What was often lacking was a proper diagnosis.

Now even the evangelists are not necessarily good diagnosticians. And we really don't know what is meant by **the word “demon.” In fact this word is used in so many different ways it's bewildering.** Sometimes it means something similar to what you might call an evil

spirit, not always. Sometimes it's used to mean a kind of mood. Sometimes it means something really good and sometimes something really bad. Sometimes it is a way of talking about illness, but not always. So **we have to be careful about the way we listen to the word God, because the word of God itself has to be interpreted, and we always have to improve our interpretation.** We have to learn all we can about both the world around us and the spiritual world that penetrates into everything, and **none of us are completely equipped.** Even the greatest saints often had troubles in these areas. So **we have to continue to learn.** Jesus' point here is we learn, **but we also have to pray for this powerful gift of faith** that will enable us to confront the mountains of problems that surely are in the path, you might say, of life.