

Matthew 17:14-23

And when they were come to the multitude, there came to him a certain man, kneeling down to him, and saying, Lord, have mercy on my son: for he is lunatick, and sore vexed: for oftentimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water. And I brought him to thy disciples, and they could not cure him. Then Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him hither to me. And Jesus rebuked the devil; and he departed out of him: and the child was cured from that very hour. Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out? And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you. Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting. And while they abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto them, The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men: And they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again. And they were exceeding sorry. (KJV)

Mental illness has been a problem through the centuries. In the current Gospel the Lord Jesus Christ addressed the issue of the son being afflicted and tormented by the devil.

The father with the afflicted son had the wisdom to turn to the Lord Jesus Christ to address his son's problem. Jesus rebuked the devil and healed the son. Jesus Christ emphasized the importance of strong faith, fasting and prayer.

Dealing with mental illness and maintaining mental wellness involve complexities. Turning to Jesus Christ first and foremost and remaining focused on Christ helps to put mental illness and mental wellness into perspective.

Having strong faith, prayer and fasting enable individuals to deal with life's stresses including having a family member with mental health issues. Keeping the focus on Christ, strong faith, prayer and fasting facilitate mental wellness.

Medical and professional mental health workers exist to address the problems of the mentally ill. The Church makes it clear the Lord Jesus Christ remains primary in the healing process for believers.

The Church has specific prayers to address the attacks by the devil. Living the life in Christ serves believers in all circumstances. The root causes of mental illness are not always readily known even after all these years.

Jesus Christ provides necessary nourishment, guidance and strength for believers faced with mental health issues personally or with a family member. The power of prayer, fasting and strong faith cannot be overestimated.

Jesus Christ speaks about moving mountains with strong faith. Having a family member with a lingering mental health issue may become a challenge as large as a mountain.

Faith in Christ, prayer and fasting will strengthen and guide believers to deal with mental health issues affecting the family. Strong faith, prayer and fasting equip believers to address the stresses of personal life.

Being an active believer, following the teachings of Christ and the Church prevents life's stresses from becoming overwhelming. Strong faith, prayer and fasting are preventive measures against depression and despair in life.

The cure for all forms of mental illness is not readily apparent. Jesus Christ is always present to help family members to address the issue of a mentally ill family member and to seek the care necessary.

The present Gospel is always timely. The present Gospel reveals Jesus Christ's healing power and authority to rebuke the devil. Dealing with mental illness requires serious attention.

Jesus Christ offers hope to families with a member suffering from mental illness. The father in the current Gospel verifies the value of having hope in Jesus Christ. The father is an example for believers with a suffering family member.

The Gospel remains relevant through the centuries. The Gospel applies to daily life. Believers investing in studying the Gospel and reading the Gospel regularly make a lasting investment in mental wellness.

The Lord God is a good and loving God with the power to heal illnesses, diseases and infirmities. Wise individuals like the father in the present Gospel turn to Jesus Christ for guidance and help.

Jesus Christ did not disappoint the father in the Gospel. Jesus Christ does not disappoint believers exercising strong faith, prayer and fasting. Love for Jesus Christ and for suffering family members are essential in the Christian life.

The father in the current Gospel loved his son and sought healing for the son. Family members are always wise to turn to Jesus Christ when seeking healing of a suffering loved one.

The Gospel has lasting wisdom. The Gospel documents the love and healing power of Jesus Christ. Seekers of healing benefit immeasurably from the wisdom and content of the Gospel.

God's Holy Church offers daily healing for all forms of infirmities and afflictions. All illnesses and afflictions are not necessarily visible. Jesus Christ is aware of the presence of any hurt in a person's heart, mind and soul.

The illness and cure of the soul are of paramount importance. Jesus Christ is the way to ensure the soul is tarnish-free and healthy. Being faithful to Jesus Christ in the Church is the pathway to health of the soul.

The Tenth Sunday after Pentecost. August 8/21, 2022. St. Emilian the Confessor. Venerable Zosimas of Tuman. Hidden Valley, Pennsylvania.

Father Rodney Torbic