

## Sixth Sunday of Matthew Sermon ~ A Large Parish

A large parish needed to build a new church building. The entire congregation agreed. Unfortunately, whenever the members got together to discuss the plans they could never agree on what to build.

The Pastor of the community called the congregation together for a special day of prayer so all the members could come together, and offer supplications to God, for wisdom and find a resolution for this issue.

As you can imagine, very few people were present for that special day of prayer. However, there was a mother and her five years old daughter. As the community began to pray, the young girl soon understood that the entire service was dedicated to building a new Church. When she and her mother went home, she asked her many questions and then became very quiet for the rest of the evening.

The next morning the mother could not find the little girl. She had disappeared out in the cold fresh fallen snow. To her mother's surprise, she saw a set of footprints and tire tracks going down the driveway.

She followed the path, which led to the pastor's house. In the front yard was the young girl with the clergyman. She had brought him two bricks in her little wheelbarrow to help start the new Church.

The pastor deeply moved by her jester shared this story with his congregation and God touched their hearts by multiplying two small bricks into a beautiful new place of worship.

Is it not interesting how the small faith of a young girl motivated an entire congregation. It was not that the two bricks made a difference, rather that combined with the efforts of everyone in the parish, they were able, to accomplish the task, of building a new Church.

Many times as Christians we take on the attitude and ask, "but what can I do I am only one person" which, is an appropriate concern. On the other hand, we may become cynical and say, "let so and so do it." Unfortunately, if we kept both of these thoughts, nothing would ever be accomplished for the glory of God.

Yet, if we asked the question in the plural, "What can we do?" We are acknowledging that we are all part of this organic community we call our Church, so in essence it our responsibility. Moreover, by involving many more people, collectively we can do a heck of a lot of things, never imagined.

Listen carefully to the words in the Passage of the Healing of the Paralytic:

"And behold, they brought to him a paralytic, lying on his bed; and when Jesus saw their faith he said to the paralytic, "Take heart, my son; your sins are forgiven." Matthew 9:2  
Clearly, we see hear that the healing of the paralytic was a collective act. In other words, it took many people to get involved. The words "they and their" indicate this.

The point is, that the success of undertaking and completing a huge event, whether it is the healing of a person, running a race, building or supporting a Church, running a festival, tackling the economy, depends on the involvement of not just one person but several individuals. To be quite honest, it takes the entire community, which results in having a thriving, God-loving and God-fearing filled Church.

St. Paul in the book of Romans outlines what it takes to achieve this. He says:

"God has given each of us a gift to do certain things well." Romans 12:6 The key words here are "given each of us."

Through our baptisms we have been given a unique gift, different from everyone else, to help build up God's Church. However, we all must use our gifts. We cannot leave the job for just a handful to accomplish.

St. Paul outlines these various gifts: service, teaching, contributors, administrators, comforters and a multitude of others. However, we have to realize that these gifts by themselves cannot make a Church operate successfully or a festival run smoothly. But when we combine all of our talents and resources, a whole lot can take place and the blessings received collectively and individually will be surmountable.

When we share our time, talents and resources with Jesus Christ and His Church, then God will honor that gift and multiply it and in turn we will be blessed in ways we would not expect. Nor can imagine. It is called faith.

You see, it does not take much and every little bit helps not just our Church, but our community and ourselves as well spiritually.

The little girl with the two bricks did not build a church. But, when everyone pulled together, they did build a beautiful temple dedicated to God. Amen.