



HEALING MINISTRY by Father Robbie Low  
Introduction

### **First Saturday in Lent**

*'Those who are well have no need of a doctor....but the sick'*

So writes the beloved physician, St. Luke. Jesus' ministry abounds with healings and we often look with envy on those who were blessed to see such wonders. The centurion's servant, the ten lepers, the woman with the haemorrhage, Blind Bartimaeus, the Gadarene demoniac, the disabled man on the pallet, to name but a few. Healing and the proclamation of the Gospel go hand in hand in Jesus' ministry.

And His Healing Ministry does not stop there. Jesus commissioned His Apostles to continue that ministry of preaching the Gospel and healing the sick. The Gospels of Mark and Matthew end with commands to do just that. John, Ch 14, recalls that Jesus foretells this witness in His disciples – *'the works that I do, you will do...'*

Nor is it simply a work of the Apostles. The deacon, Philip, heals (Acts 8). Ananias, a layman in Damascus, heals the blinded Paul. There is no scriptural justification for assuming that the healing ministry of Jesus was limited to the Apostles or the 'Apostolic era'. This is a typical aberration of the Reformation period and failure to understand the sacraments. Indeed while the Reformation was in full swing, St Francis Xavier was out East employing children to go exercise the ministry of healing among the people. This is primarily because the children were less anxious about the possibility of failure, more open to the Holy Spirit of God, simply believing and faithful. They didn't have the adult hang ups that we have.

Three things to remember then as we begin our work together this morning:

- 1) The Healing Ministry of Jesus is mandated and promised to His Church.
- 2) Our healing ministry is always 'in the name of Jesus'
- 3) Our share in His ministry is not in opposition to the wonders of medicine that God has revealed in Creation and Science. As so often in the Catholic Faith it's not either /or but both/and.

St. Luke tells us of Jesus this morning, '*The well do not need a doctor... but the sick*'. And we will observe, both in this Gospel and in our first healing story later on, the link between the two great sacraments of Healing – Reconciliation and Restoration. Stay tuned.