

Bishop Jaime Soto – Homily for Saturday,
February 20, 2010
World Day of the Sick Mass

The Lord Jesus revealed himself to us by taking on our human nature. He became one like us. This enabled us to know him in a personal way.

We came to know his heart by the deeds he did as well as by those with whom he approached. This is an important -- yet sometimes overlooked – element of his ministry. We know of the healing mercy and restorative love of the Lord because he drew close to those who were sick and those who were sinners. The sick and the sinner became his witnesses.

Jesus just could have talk about his love for others. He could have simply taught us about caring for the sick. He did more than that. He laid his hand upon rotted flesh of the lepers. He took the arms of the feeble lame and lifted them up so they could walk. He sat with sinners. He wiped the tears from their cheeks and let the loving light of his eyes brighten their darken faces. Because he did all these things, we know that His mercy is everlasting and his love is untiring.

This is why we come here today. We come to meet the Lord Jesus. The Church's ministry to the sick and to the sinner strives to bring healing and hope to them. More than this, we do what Jesus did with the certain hope that in approaching our brothers and sisters who are sick and frail we can also be in the presence of the Lord and gaze upon His face.

“Let us see your face, O Lord and we shall be saved,” Psalm 80 instructs us to sing. This petition is answered time and time again in these Sacraments of saving encounter, the Anointing of the Sick, the Sacrament of Penance, and the Holy Eucharist.

The Prophet Isaiah (Is. 58.9-14) speaks to us today about charity and worship. Charity: “If you bestow your bread on the hungry and satisfy the afflicted; Then light shall rise for you in the darkness, and the gloom shall become for you like midday.” Worship: “If you call the

Sabbath a delight, and the Lord's holy day honorable; If you honor it by not following your ways, seeking your own interests, or speaking with malice; Then you shall delight in the LORD." The prophet understood that charity and worship intertwined in the life of the disciple help us to see the face of the Lord who saves us. True charity leads us to worship the Lord in those we serve. True worship leads us to love our brothers and sisters with whom and in whom we find the Lord who "emptied himself, taking the form of a slave." (Phil. 2.7) True health and true salvation is found in our coming together as brothers and sisters of the one Lord, Jesus.

In this sacred sacramental celebration, we find the rituals of charity and worship intertwined into one saving act, the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus on the Cross. We stand with one another, whether sick or sinner, whether feeble or fallen, knowing that the pierced hands of the Lord Jesus will touch us. From His wounded heart will flow the grace of healing and hope. The light of His loving eyes will dispel the shadows of sin. His outstretched arms will lift up us all into the enduring embrace of His love.