



Reflections on 'The Greater Things'

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"Amen, Amen, I say to you, whoever believes in me will do the works that I do, and will do greater things than these, because I am going to the Father." (John 14:12)

ASK BIG! By: Jaci Phillips, PhD

**"You have not because
they ask not." James 4:2**

Why are the miracles seen in the Bible not more commonplace today? They DO happen. People have been raised from the dead. Many have been delivered from demons. I have personally witnessed people get out of wheelchairs and walk, and people born blind or deaf, see and hear. I have seen food multiplied. I have seen weather changed. These miracles, and many, many more happen every day. Yet, we don't commonly see miracles following believers today as they did in the past.

There is much speculation about why. Some Christians are 'cessationist.' They believe that the gifts and works of the Holy Spirit were only active to initially spread the Gospel and then ceased at some point. But Catholics are *not* cessationist. We know that the Holy Spirit, along with all the gifts of the Holy Spirit, are meant to be alive and active in the Church *today*. Yet, there are many Catholics, and even charismatics, who do not walk in the reality of this knowledge and power. Without the transformation of the Holy Spirit within our faith, it remains somewhat two dimensional. It comes alive when we recognize that our relationship with Jesus is a real relationship with the Living God of the universe. It is a relationship where we not only know about Jesus, but we *know* Jesus. He becomes real. And His gift of the Holy Spirit, as in the second chapter of Acts (and throughout the New Testament), also becomes real.

So the question remains:
***Why do we not walk in the amazing
power of the Holy Spirit that
Jesus intended?***

Perhaps it is as easy as *"You do not have, because you do not ask"* James 4:2, BSB.; OR we ask wrongly, *"And when you do ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may squander it on your pleasures."* James 4:3, BSB.

Here is where I encourage you to *just step out and ask!* I believe that God is pleased when His children recall that He is the God of the difficult and impossible. I compare it to a young child who is in awe that his dad can do incredible things, and the dad is only encouraged to do more as he finds his young child in awe of him! I recall the schoolyard debates of "My dad is better than your dad!" There is something so beautiful about that childlike belief in our fathers. I encourage you to not ask small; what looks big to us is actually easy for God so, ***ask big!*** We serve a big God who has done some of His most amazing miracles simply because someone asked!

On the day the LORD gave the Amorites over to Israel, Joshua said to the LORD in the presence of Israel: "Sun, stand still over Gibeon, and you, moon, over the Valley of Aijalon." So the sun stood still, and the moon stopped, till the nation avenged itself on its enemies, as it is written in the Book of Jashar. The sun stopped in the middle of the sky and delayed going down about a full day. There has never been a day like it before or since, a day when the LORD listened to a human being.

Josh 10:12-14, BSB.



**The sun stood
"because the Lord
listened to a human being!"
WOW!!!!**

And Again in Isaiah chapter 38, one man who was about to die cried out to the Lord for more time.

In those days, when Hezekiah was mortally ill, the prophet Isaiah, son of Amoz, came and said to him: "Thus says the LORD: Put your house in order, for you are about to die; you shall not recover." Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed to the LORD:

"Ah, LORD, remember how faithfully and wholeheartedly I conducted myself in your presence, doing what was good in your sight!" And Hezekiah wept bitterly. Then the word of the LORD came to Isaiah:

Go, tell Hezekiah: Thus says the LORD, the God of your father David: I have heard your prayer; I have seen your tears. Now I will add fifteen years to your life. I will rescue you and this city from the hand of the king of Assyria; I will be a shield to this city. This will be the sign for you from the LORD that the LORD will carry out the word he has spoken: See, I will make the shadow cast by the sun on the stairway to the terrace of Ahaz- go back the ten steps it has advanced. So the sun came back the ten steps it had advanced.

The Lord answered his prayer by adding 15 years to his life AND moved the sun back 10 places from where it had been. Time moved backward because one man asked! There are so many places in the Bible where people are healed or a region is delivered, etc., *because someone asked.*

My favorite example of *asking boldly* is the prophet Elisha. So many lessons regarding Elisha. First, when God told Elijah to anoint Elisha a prophet, he found Elisha faithfully plowing his field with 12 yoke of oxen. He was doing what the Lord put before him when God called him to a higher calling. That's what we should all be doing: faithfully tending the field God gave us until HE calls us to

A few years back I attended a virtual conference on the Theology of the body (or “TOB” as it is frequently denoted).

TOB is a series of lectures that were given by Pope Saint John Paul II. There are many topics covered in TOB including resurrection, liturgy, art, human sexuality, marriage, purity, and others. I learned a lot of things in this conference and in my subsequent study of TOB. My main takeaway is this: *we have warped desires*. We have put “roots” down into ideas and sinful actions that need to be taken up.

In Matthew 18:1-4 Jesus is questioned by his disciples and gives us critical insight into how we are to live. I believe that in this verse he is telling us that we must take up the sinful “roots” we have put down.

“At that time the disciples approached Jesus and said, “Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?” He called a child over, placed it in their midst, and said, “Amen, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.”



What does he mean by this? We can be sure that this is a call to humility, but I think it goes deeper than that. When we are children, our roots aren’t very warped yet. All we really care about is God, our family, our friends, and ourselves. Our desires are simpler and purer. Somewhere along the line, our desires warp.

Compare an eight-year-old to an eighteen-year-old, think about what happens in those ten years. What do they struggle with? What are their desires? We know it is not uncommon for high school and college kids to struggle with things like pornography, masturbation, premarital sex, homosexuality, anorexia, bulimia, cutting, drugs, alcohol, depression, suicide, abortion, atheism, occult/new age practices, agnosticism, despair, laziness, hatred, gossip, bullying, indifference, anger, and all sorts of other reckless

behaviors. Do eight-year-olds struggle with those things? Generally speaking, no. Most children are perfectly happy unless they have abuse going on at home or a serious illness; neither of which are their fault. So, what happens in the course of those ten years? Why is it that our young people are always struggling so much? There are many reasons, but I believe the main reason is that we lose sight of what we actually want... God! Desires in and of themselves are not inherently bad. Pornography? Your real desire is to appreciate the beauty of the human body. Premarital sex? Your real desire is to be intimately connected with someone. Drugs and alcohol? Your real desire is to feel good and lighten your stress. None of the real desires are bad! The problem is that we forget what the real desire is and how to go about fulfilling it.

As we grow out of childhood we get attacked from all sides. Secular tv, movies, music, social media, and the many temptations and confusions that are launched at us by the devil. By the time we are five to ten years removed from our childhood, we are already knotted up like a pretzel with deep roots going down into counterfeit desires that we have been convinced we want/need.

The devil cannot create anything. He is part of creation. The only creator is God. God has created our desires and all the devil can do is counterfeit them. The evil one will set out to mess up our desires and try and get us to put roots down into sinful and disordered things that are a mere mockery of a greater good.

One of the central themes of the Christian life is to work with the Holy Spirit and cooperate with grace to take up the misshapen roots and to put down new good ones; roots that get to the heart of what our real desires are.

Matthew 11:28-30

“Come to me all you who are labored and burdened and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest for yourselves. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

There’s a *lightness* to following Christ. When was the last time that we all felt this lightness? For many of us, it was when we were children. Life was simple and our desires were generally pure. I’ve noticed in my own life that whenever I experience an outpouring of the Holy

Spirit there is always a personal change. I don’t *go back* to my old “normal” I *develop a new one*! The one constant that I’ve noticed across these outpourings is that I always feel more like a child after. I see my desires more clearly, I trust God more, I love easier, I forgive easier, and I am moved by Christ more easily. My burden becomes *lighter*. I see clearly because I am less prone to sin. I trust God more because I become more humble and know I can’t do it alone. I love easier because I am filled with love and joy that wants to flow out of me. I forgive easier because I realize that I need forgiveness too. And I am moved easier because my warped roots have been pulled up out of the ground (well...most of them. Still ‘gardening’!). It’s a joy to return to childlike innocence and simplicity.

The Holy Spirit will never stop knocking on the door of our hearts. He will always be trying to teach us how to live and return to our true desires given by God. The process will go a lot faster and be a lot more enjoyable if we are willing to work with him. God will wrestle with you if you force him to...he loves you too much to leave you in sin. He won’t force himself on you, but he will never stop showing up. If we meet the Holy Spirit with docility and we allow Him to do his work in our lives, our roots will come up a lot easier and our good and Godly desires will be properly fulfilled.

The devil will give us saltwater. It looks good, it looks hydrating, and it looks like it will satiate you. But it won’t. It will only dehydrate you and leave you wanting more. What God offers us is the fresh and living water of His Spirit. It is water that hydrates, satiates, and gives life. Let us trust in the Holy Spirit and follow him without reserve. Knowing that he will take up our warped roots and put down new good ones and he will give us the water that gives us life.

God bless you as you tend the garden of your desires!



ASK BIG! By: Jaci Phillips, PhD - continued from page one

something else. We are given bigger things when we have faithfully tended the smaller things. And much of the time, as we learn from St Therese of Lisieux, the smaller things *are* the bigger things. So take care to tend your field.

Then Elijah threw his mantle over Elisha as a sign and as an invitation. I love Elisha. Elisha 'ran' after Elijah! Elisha never does anything halfway.

And Elijah came over to him and threw his cloak on him. Then he left the oxen behind and ran after Elijah and he took the pair of oxen and sacrificed them, and cooked their meat with the implements of the oxen, and gave it to the people and they ate. Then he got up and followed Elijah and served him.

1 Kings 19:19-21, NASB.



Not only does he say 'yes,' but he goes back and he slaughters the 12 oxen and roasts the flesh upon the wood of his plow; he says 'yes,' in such a way that he makes it impossible to go back to his former way of life. Elisha was willing to give up his family, his occupation, and everything in his life he had gained to that point in order to follow the higher calling of God almighty.

When Elisha is aware that Elijah is close to death, three times Elijah asks Elisha to leave him, and all three times Elijah replies "As the Lord lives, I will not leave you." (see 2 Kings 2:1-6).

Now comes my favorite part, when Elijah is about to go to the Lord, he asks Elisha what he can do for him. Elisha *does not ask small*, He asks **BIG!**

*"Please let **DOUBLE PORTION** of your spirit be upon me." Elijah, likely shocked at so bold a request, responded, "You have asked a hard thing; yet, if you see me as I am being taken from you, it will be granted you; if not, it will not." As they continued walking and talking, a chariot of fire and horses of fire separated the two of them, and Elijah ascended in a whirlwind into heaven. Elisha kept watching and crying out, "Father, father! The chariots of Israel and its horsemen!" But when he could no longer see him, he grasped his own clothes and tore them in two pieces.*

He picked up the mantle of Elijah that had fallen from him, and went back and stood on the bank of the Jordan.

¹⁴He took the mantle of Elijah that had fallen from him, and struck the water, saying, "Where is the LORD, the God of Elijah?" When he had struck the water, the water was parted to the one side and to the other, and Elisha went over. 2 Kings 2:10-14, NRSV, emphasis added.

Elisha was given a double portion of the Spirit that rested on Elijah *because he asked*. He ministered to God's people in that double portion... *because he asked*. Elisha must have asked 'rightly.' God did

not view him as greedy or chasing after power or miracles. At times I think we fail to ask big because we have been conned by the devil into thinking that asking for a true double portion of God's Holy Spirit, or asking to minister in true signs and wonders is somehow selfish or showy or greedy. It can be, but ASK RIGHTLY and BELIEVE!

Jesus plainly told his disciples that they were unsuccessful because they lacked faith,

"Why couldn't we drive it out?" "Because you have so little faith," He answered. "For truly I tell you, if you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you."

Luke 17:19-20, BSB.

We live in a world that needs the wonder of the presence of God. Just like in Jesus' time, people often need to see and experience to believe. Let us grab hold of this promise, knowing that when we have faith and we ask rightly, NOTHING will be impossible.

Please join us for our August luncheon, *Ask Of Me*, as our guest Alicia Hartle dives into this topic! I cannot adequately express how excited I am about this after speaking to Alicia on the phone for "quick" phone calls that turned into more than four hours of confirmation of how the Lord is MOVING!

'Ask Of Me!' "Greater Things"
Luncheon Saturday 8/20/2022
9:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Guest speaker:
Alicia Hartle, Executive Director of
Pentecost Today. see flyer

DOUBLE PORTION



FAITH ON FIRE!
CATHOLIC CHARISMATIC
RENEWAL CENTER

ASK OF ME

GREATER THINGS LUNCHEON

"Ask me, and I will make the nations your inheritance,
the ends of the earth your possession."

PS 2:8

FAITH ON FIRE! CATHOLIC CHARISMATIC RENEWAL

Saturday August 20th, 9:30AM - 12:00PM

(Take your box lunch to go or stay and eat with us until 1PM)

St. Joseph Bread of Life Community Center, 147 West 24th Street, Erie PA

Worship by Harmony's House



SPEAKER INFO:

Amazing guest speaker, Alicia Hartle, who is the Executive Director for Pentecost Today and the National Charismatic Service Committee, will be speaking on the power of faith to change EVERYTHING. We have a big God who is able to answer BIG prayers!

Alicia Hartle serves as executive director of Pentecost Today USA (the National Service Committee of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal in the US) and is a founding member of an ecumenical household, The Oakland Prayer Group, Abba's House, Unbound Pittsburgh-Greensburg, and Catholic Women's Fellowship ministries. Born into the fire of Renewal in the Pittsburgh area, she has worked in ministry and business development on local, national, and international levels. Knowing God and making Him known are her greatest passions.

A delicious box lunch will be provided. \$10 for early registration by August 10th. \$12.50 August 11-17th. \$8.00 at the door, lunch not provided. Please use this link to register:

<http://bit.ly/ASKOFME>

or call TA at 814-833-9717 to register by phone. If fee is a hardship, please also call TA for a scholarship.

OPEN THE DOOR TO THE STORE HOUSE OF HIS MIRACLES

By: Michael H. Brown (used with permission)

Be diligent. Be persistent. Tend to details. Do His Will.

And don't just toss up a quick prayer. Pray like you mean it, which means putting emotion behind it. Clean the slate; wait very patiently; and handle all with humility, reconciliation, and love. If you love, you will not fear because God is love and He is around you.

This brings us to another important element: enthusiasm.

Be enthusiastic.

Just as persistence indicates a deeper level of faith, so does enthusiasm. Be enthusiastic about prayer, about God, and about what you expect. To be enthusiastic is to live out the meaning of the word, for enthusiasm comes from two Greek words, *en* and *theos*, meaning, to be in God. There is no limit to what we can accomplish in His power. When we are not afraid of failure, but trust in the Lord, and persist, we always find ourselves with 12 baskets left over. Enthusiasm is the energy that transcends darkness.

You may be tested for a "season" (on occasion, the Lord will hold back grace), but if you keep to it, are *enthusiastic*, and *persevere*, matters will fall into place.

The more you pray, the more results you will see, and the more your faith will grow, which unlocks the miracles that God has in store for you. Did you know that God has a storehouse of wonders He would like to give to you? When we die we'll be shown this "storehouse" and be disappointed we didn't attain more of what is in it.

How do we secure what God has earmarked for us, and especially how do we obtain what we need to fulfill our missions? We pray and let the Holy Spirit inspire us. He does so consciously and through our subconscious. Prayer is the language of miracles, and the more we do it, the more we click into the rhythm of miracles.

Reading the Bible aloud, reciting the Scriptural Rosary, and attending Mass are among the most effective for me. Most potent are prayers that go directly to Jesus. Asking Christ to be your Savior, and then speaking with Him as if He were right there, establishing a personal relationship, will take you to a new level. Pray from your depths during Mass when the Host is raised. Have saints and angels praying with you around you.

Repetitious prayers, especially ones said

when we're paying close attention to the words, count for much, in the way that God counts any acknowledgment; they open doors, even when they are said a bit absently; God takes note of such prayers because they indicate that at least we have Him on our minds! Pray in any way you are comfortable.

But spontaneous prayer from deep within is most effective. You must go to Christ. You have to treat Him as a friend. He doesn't wish any distance from you. If it is a set prayer, pay attention to the words. Pray as slowly as you can. Envision the Lord. Envision the saints around you. Project yourself to God. Feel the angels.

Let it all hang out.

Christ wants you to spill your troubles to Him in more detail than you relate even to your spouse. Involve Him in every word, decision, and struggle, pleading for the knowledge to know His Will. The Lord helps every person on earth, but those who pray open the door to that storehouse.

Online Source: spiritdailyblog.com/miracles/open-the-door-to-the-storehouse-of-his-miracles

EXORCIST DIARY #189, MAGIC VS FAITH

By: Msgr. Stephen Rossetti (used with permission)

She had been involved with yoga, gurus, practitioners of witchcraft and magic for over ten years. By the grace of God, she had a profound experience of Jesus and it changed her life. Her eyes were opened to the evil in which she had been involved and she stopped all occult practices. She reverted to the Catholic faith with a new enthusiasm and conviction.

But the demons of divination, who had remained largely hidden, now made their ugly presence felt.* They mentally tortured her and she suffered demonic bouts of lethargy, mental pain, and depression. After many months of deliverance sessions, she is much better, although still not completely freed. The demons hang on.

She is progressively being purified and healed, peeling back inner layer after layer. She recently received a graced, critical insight that especially got my attention. She told me that she realized that, while she had stopped all these occult and magic practices, she still had an underlying magical way of approaching the spiritual life.

For example, when praying for someone, she sometimes would send her own "healing energy" directly at the person rather than asking God to help them. When she worried about someone or something, she might try to "visualize" the answer to the worry, trying to divine what will happen in the future, rather than asking God to take care of it. She sometimes found herself using her occult "third eye" to try to spiritually "see" or know something. She then said, "I realized I am still trying to control situations. I realized that I have an issue with real trust in the Lord."

She added, "The core issue is really trusting in the Lord- in His omnipotence and love for me." She said, "When I begin to practice a complete abandonment to God's providence like a child, I really feel free from this kind of magical thinking. This is when the demons seem to be the farthest away from me."

The difference between faith and magic is fundamental. The Christian trusts in God and humbly receives all graces from God, as He wills. The practitioner of magic and the occult attempts to control spiritual forces and access hidden knowledge, thus trying to gain the desired power and benefits.

Her insight is another great grace from the Lord. I am pleased for her accepting this grace. It suggests that her full liberation is one large step closer.

**It is not uncommon that a person practicing the occult will be deeply but unknowingly immersed in the demonic world. The evil ones keep their presence hidden. However, if the person then rejects the occult world and turns to the faith, the demons will no longer remain hidden and begin to torment and torture the person.*

View online at:

www.catholicexorcism.org/post/exorcist-diary-189-magic-vs-faith



Word of Life
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Word of Life Presents

FAN INTO FLAME SEMINAR

STEPPING OUT IN THE SPIRITUAL GIFTS

SATURDAY, JUNE 18, 2022, 9AM - 4PM

Registration by Thursday, June 16th at bit.ly/FLAME2022

or Call T.A. at (814) 824-1282, \$15

2nd Floor of St. Joseph Bread of Life Community Center 147 W 24th St, Erie, PA

Led by Jaci Phillips and Pat Montefiori, this is a safe and friendly environment to both learn and practice the Gifts. Contrary to what we sometimes think, the Gifts do not necessarily just descend on us in full power at the moment that we are Baptized in the Holy Spirit. We have to *step out* in them. And that can be a little intimidating in your everyday life. So this is a safe place to learn about and to practice; to Fan into the Flame! Bonus session on basics of deliverance included (time permitting)

This seminar is for people who have received the Baptism in the Holy Spirit.

SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE if fee is a hardship

upcoming events

First Saturday Mass

In honor of Our Lady

9:00 AM at St. Gregory's, Northeast, PA

Sacred Music beginning at 8:50 AM

Soloist, Jacqueline Phillip - Organist Corey Spacht

Celebrant: Rev. Jerry Priscaro

Praise and Adoration Holy Hour—First Monday's

6:30 - 7:30 PM at St. Agatha-Epiphany of the Lord Parish

353 Pine, Street, Meadville PA

Worship Team - Harmony's House

Fan Into The Flame Seminar

St. Joseph/Bread of Life Community Center

Saturday - June 18 2022

9:00 am - 4:00 pm

Cost: \$15, *see flyer for details*

Spirit Filled - Healing Mass

2022 - August 9th, October 11th

Worship 6:15 PM Mass 6:30 PM

Holy Rosary Church—2701 East Ave, Erie

Ask of Me!

Greater Things Luncheon

Saturday - 9:30 AM - 1:00 PM

August 20, 2022

St. Joseph/Bread of Life Community Center

Guest speaker, Alicia Hartle, Executive Director of Pentecost Today. *see flyer for details*

Annual Adoration Worship Concert

Thursday, September 15, 2022

7:00 PM - 9:00 PM

St. George Church



*Greater Things
Conference
October 2022*

Jesus, Son of God, in whom the fullness of the Divinity dwells, You call all the baptized to "put out into the deep," taking the path that leads to holiness. Waken in the hearts of young people the desire to be witnesses in the world of today to the power of your love. Fill them with your Spirit of fortitude and prudence, so that they may be able to discover the full truth about themselves and their own vocation. Our Savior, sent by the Father to reveal His merciful love, give to your Church the gift of young people who are ready to put out into the deep, to be the sign among their brothers of Your presence which renews and saves. Holy Virgin, Mother of the Redeemer, sure guide on the way towards God and towards neighbor, You who pondered his word in the depth of your heart, sustain with your motherly intercession our families and our ecclesial communities, so that they may help adolescents and young people to answer generously the call of the Lord. Amen.

—John Paul II—

You Can Help Make a Difference

Word of Life is *completely* dependent upon your donations to spread the fire of the Holy Spirit in the Diocese of Erie.

Your donation, no matter how much, makes a big difference!

Contributions can be made by check, text, Tithe.ly app, and on the website.

Checks can be made payable to:

Word of Life Charismatic Renewal Center

St. Mark Catholic Center

429 E. Grandview Blvd

Erie, PA 16514



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Text the word "give" to our dedicated giving number: (570) 536-9187



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Reflections

on 'The Greater Things'

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The office is generally open limited hours.
Please call before coming.

The purpose of this newsletter is to proclaim
the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and to provide
teaching, news, and calendar of events, which
help to foster Catholic Charismatic Renewal
throughout the Diocese of Erie.

This newsletter may be copied to put in
churches or shared with others.

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Volume XXXVI

Issue No. 05

FAITH ON FIRE!
CATHOLIC CHARISMATIC
RENEWAL CENTER

ASK OF ME

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