

## FR JOHANN JOSEPH GASSNER, THE FAMED GERMAN EXORCIST

There was an unauthorised exorcist in Germany in the 1700s, the Catholic priest Johann Joseph Gassner. Such was his fame as showing by the crowds around him, he got academic attention from Catholic and Protestant thinkers. His activities became more deranged and disturbing. The Pope had to intervene and ban him from performing public exorcisms which had always been well intended.

One complaint is that he was exorcising people who did not show the "typical" signs of really being possessed. He treated illness as a sign of demonic activity so if you had skin disease you were subjected to an exorcism! He used to test this by asking the illness to get worse if it was the work of a demon. If it did he proceeded with an exorcism.

The power of the placebo effect is shown by the crowds and huge fanbase he had. We could be talking about the Jesus of the gospels. If one was a fraud so could the other be. Jesus got no expert attention from the intellectuals of his day but Gassner did! Interesting and telling.

What you are not told by critics of this man is that Jesus himself regarded illness as evidence enough of a possession! Jesus never tried to help anybody accept his or her sickness. He either walked past them or did a miracle to cure. This is what you would expect if a man did not believe sickness could just happen and who was blaming demons for it. This is consistent with his refusal to try and diagnose possession with a procedure. He had the disciples being that reckless too. If you were sick you were possessed period. Don't accept your sickness for it is accepting a demon!

You are never told any of that in church!