

36 Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time Year B June 27, 2021
Wisdom 1:13-15; 2:23-24 Psalm 30 2Corinthians 8:7,9,13-15 Mark 5:21-43

In today's Gospel, we meet two people who have faith in Jesus. We have a man named Jairus, and then we have a woman who is not named. The first miracle is Jesus restoring life to the woman and the second miracle is Jesus' power over death. One speaks his request aloud while the other offers her interior thoughts.

Jesus hears both of their prayers, just as He hears our prayers today. These are just two examples of Jesus' compassion for human suffering while He was on earth. St. Mark's Gospel today highlights the fact that Jesus has time to stop what He is doing in order to help others.

The story begins when Jesus steps off the boat after crossing the Sea of Galilee. Jairus, a leader of the synagogue, sees Jesus, and "*he fell at His feet*" begging Jesus to come to his house to lay His hands on his little daughter and cure her of her illness. Jesus responds with compassion and kindness to the man's plea and asks Jairus to take Him to his home.

Sandwiched within this event is the story of a woman who has hemorrhaged for twelve years and spent everything she had with no cure. Sadly, nothing worked. While on the way to Jairus' home, the woman touches the hem of Jesus' cloak. Why, after spending twelve years working with every doctor she could come by would she suddenly touch Jesus' clothes in order to be healed? This woman's faith knew she would be healed, and her knowledge of this came to her as a gift imparted by God. This interior thinking is a beautiful illustration of faith. She gives a wonderful witness to all who would read her story centuries later.

Jesus stops and asks who it is who has touched Him. It clearly seemed ridiculous to the Apostles when Jesus ask, "*Who touched me?*" All they could see was the pressing crowd. But Jesus sees more than that. A personal encounter with the woman follows.

Jesus does not want to admonish the woman, but to be able to tell her tenderly, "*Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace.*" Jesus calls the woman *Daughter* is one of the most beautiful moments in Scripture. She is not simply another needy face in the crowd, but a *Daughter*.

The heart of Jesus can never resist a hand outstretched in need or an appeal for help made in faith. Healing is at the centre of Jesus' public ministry, and a point worthy of note is that His healing extends to both a person's body and to their soul.

There is a great lesson in this story that we must have the same depth of faith and trust and the same commitment to turn to Jesus with our life. Even if we have tried every other option in life, we must all embrace the witness this woman gave. Turning to Jesus with deep certainty and faith means we know that His *will* is all that matters.

Many people today, who are suffering from disease or other afflictions, would love to have the opportunity to touch the hem of Jesus' garment in order to be healed, to have a personal encounter with Him.. The truth is, we have a personal encounter with Jesus available to us. In the Sacraments of the Holy Eucharist, of Reconciliation or Confession, and of the Anointing of the Sick, we touch the cloak of Jesus. He brings His loving healing to our sick bodies and spirit.

Then Jesus continues on His journey to cure the little girl, only to be told that she has died. To continue further might seem useless to the ordinary person, but with calm authority Jesus proceeds to the house where she is lying on her bed. We can just imagine the Apostles' hearts sinking when they see the girl lying there. The messengers were right. It is too late. The child is dead. Her breathing has stopped. There is no life left within her. Jesus ushers out the wailers, and tenderly taking the little girl's hand, Jesus speaks the words of life, "*Little girl, get up,*" and the little girl arises.

Imagine the scene. The Apostles watch in amazement as her breathing returns. She opens her eyes and looks around the room and sees Jesus and the Apostles and her parents. Then we see the parents crying because their daughter has died, and now they are joyfully hugging their little girl because she is alive. Everyone in the room is completely astonished. Jesus, always attentive and aware of our human needs, says these very tender words to the parents, "*Give her something to eat.*"

All of us are important to Jesus. As with the little girl, Jesus tells His Church to give us something to eat. Our something to eat is found in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass where Christ feeds us. We have a genuine physical encounter with Jesus Christ, fully present in our midst in the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity in the Holy Eucharist.

The mission of the Church is to continue the healing work which Jesus began through His miracles. Every Catholic is called to this ministry in one way or another. The unique healing power of Jesus is in His willingness to show us His loving compassion. All of us are called to *re-present* God by our Christ-like actions, and nobody can be excused from showing care and compassion to others as Jesus did because it is part of our vocation to be healers.

Each of us can do some healing if we allow ourselves to become Jesus' instrument. We may not be able to cure others, but it is within our power to pray for, to love, and to care for others who are part of our lives. Our lives are continually touching those of other people, and to care for each other is a very healing gift. If we can create communities where people can get together, work together, and support each other, then healing becomes a part of everyday life.

The woman who comes to Jesus is a deeply wounded person. In her case the wound is visible. But people can be wounded without it appearing visibly on the outside. They may have invisible wounds, feelings of abuse, rejection, failure, or worthlessness; or feelings of loneliness, bitterness, hostility, anger, or guilt. With a little care, we can ease a troubled mind, a troubled soul. By being attentive to people's needs and giving a little of our time, we can ease the pain of someone who needs our healing touch.

Our task is to deal with the wounds and the sicknesses of the world, thus helping ourselves and others to become more holy before our heavenly Father. There is such gentleness and tenderness and love in Jesus' healing the woman and little girl. We must also show the same tenderness and love as Jesus in our caring for others. We dress the wound, but it is God who does the healing.

We are *daughters* and *sons* of the Father; Christ is our brother. Jesus desires to heal us, however we are broken, with compassion and love. He desires this so much that He suffered and died, Himself, that we might live. We can approach Jesus as Jairus did, and as the woman in the crowd did, confident of His care and His desire for our good. Our faith in Jesus will allow Him to work in us for our sake, and that of the world.

Reflect today if you only turn to Jesus when everything else seems to fail you. But it shouldn't be so. We are called to build a daily habit of seeking Jesus to "*touch His*

clothes” every day. We must turn our heart, mind, will and soul to Jesus always. Build this interior habit and you will see miracles of grace in your life.