

Homily for the 13th Sunday in Ordinary Times

June 30-July 1, 2018

Readings: Wisdom 1:13-15; 2:23-24; 2 Corinthians 8:7,9,13-15; Mark 5:21-43

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Today's readings are about Jesus as the Giver of Life. The gospel is two related stories, with one inside the other. Jairus, a synagogue official, begs Jesus to lay hands on his 12-year old daughter "to make her better and save her life."

As Jesus sets out for Jairus' house he is followed by a huge crowd of people. Now the second story begins: a woman who has suffered a hemorrhage for 12 years is in the crowd. She had spent all her resources on treatments from doctors with no relief. Like many others, she had heard about Jesus and, moved by a deep faith in him, she believed that if she could just touch the hem of his cloak it would be enough for her to be healed.

In fact, the moment she touched Jesus' clothes her bleeding stopped. She knew that she had been cured. Jesus turned and asked: "Who touched my clothes?" He knew that power had gone out from him. Many people must have been bumping him, but Jesus knew that one person had touched him in a different way, a way that had drawn out his healing power. The woman, in fear, stepped forward. She was not afraid of Jesus. She was afraid because she should not have been there at all. And that is why she had not approached him openly in the first place. Her bleeding problem made her unclean and, if the people around had known about it, she would have been sent away, abruptly. Now her illness is going to be

exposed. But she steps forward and tells him everything. There is no anger on Jesus' part.

"My daughter," he says kindly, "your faith has restored you to health; go in peace and be free from your complaint." Jesus, the resurrection and the life, has restored her to fullness of life. Not only is she physically cured but she is fully restored to a normal social life and can be fully integrated into her society. It was her deep faith in Jesus, symbolized by her mere touching the hem of his garment. Just as Jesus finishes with the woman, Jairus is told that his daughter has died and that there is no need to bother Jesus any further. Jesus may be a healer, but he is not expected to bring the dead back to life.

Jesus, however, insists on going and he says beautiful words which we need to hear him saying often in our own lives, *"Do not be afraid; only have faith."* When he arrives at the side of the young girl, He takes her by the hands and tells her: "Little girl, I tell you to get up." And the 12-year-old girl immediately got up and walked around as if nothing had been wrong with her. Those words, "get up," have reflections of resurrection, the "getting up" of Jesus from his own tomb. This is St. Mark's way of stating what Jesus says with more detail in John's gospel: "I am the resurrection and the life." This young girl was restored to fullness of life and Jesus is revealed as the Lord of life.

Both of these stories show Jesus as the source of life and healing. As the first reading says today, "God takes no pleasure in the extinction of the living." We

have been made, the book of Wisdom tells us, to be in the image of God's own nature. And in Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians, "For you know the gracious act of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, for your sake he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich."

In all three readings today, Jesus is the Giver of Life. May we keep that in mind as we live and breathe each day due only to God's grace, and may we live life to the fullest to prepare us for the heavenly kingdom. Amen.