

13th Sunday OT – Mark 5:21-43, “Jairus and the Bleeding Woman”

Today’s gospel reading gives us two miracles for the price of one! Jairus’ daughter 12 years old is sick and near death and the woman had been afflicted with hemorrhages for 12 years. Could there be a connection between the two?

The evangelist Mark uses the two miracles in a technique called sandwiching, where one miracle is inserted inside the other. It would seem the more important story would be inserted into the other story, that is, the story of the woman afflicted with hemorrhages is inserted inside the story of Jairus’ daughter.

In the first story, Jairus comes forward with his request for Jesus to heal his daughter who is at the point of death. However, when the crowd comes to tell him, “Your daughter has died, why trouble the teacher any longer?” In other words, give up your request of Jesus. Forget it, your daughter is dead. However, Jesus encourages the official not give up, “Just have faith!”

The second story tells of a woman’s faith that is so great that, “If I but touch his clothes, I shall be cured...Immediately her flow of blood dried up.” What faith! We will not see this kind of faith until the healing of the Centurion’s servant. Is this the kind of faith that Mark is trying to model for us in today’s passage?

What is even more fascinating is that Jesus wasn’t even aware of *who* touched him, and even his disciples were surprised! Maybe this passage is a good example of the Holy Spirit leading the woman of great faith to Jesus to be healed. And the woman approached Jesus and told him the whole truth. And Jesus said to her, “Your faith has saved you!”

Is Jairus or the woman representative of our faith? I suspect that there are many of us here who constantly prayer for others, like family members, neighbors, friends, relatives, those at work, parishioners, the world...and don’t give up. In a way, we as a faith community constantly pray not only for ourselves but also for the world, each Sunday, through the words of this Eucharist that we celebrate. And I am sure there are times when we are tempted to give up. “Why trouble the teacher any longer?”

As for Jairus, some are carried along by the crowd, hoping for a great miracle to help our little faith. They are those who like to chase rumors of miraculous sitings and apparitions. And when the healings don’t come, especially in the

way we want, we give up. This is different when we make desperate trips with loved ones to Our Lady of Fatima or other shrines of healing.

Those who accompanied Jairus addressed Jesus as teacher. "Why bother the teacher any longer?" What happened to the title, **Lord?** At one point in our faith development hopefully Jesus will become Lord rather than rabbi or teacher. In Matthew's gospel, all the disciples respond to Jesus' revealing that one of them will betray him with, "Is it I Lord?" except for Judas. "Is it I, teacher?"

"Then (Jesus) puts them all out. He took along the child's father and mother and those who were with him and entered the room where the child was." Sometimes we need to politely leave those behind or **outside**, especially those who have trouble believing. It is important who our friends are, especially friends in faith.

When Jesus healed the child, they were all **utterly astounded!** The woman who was healed of her bleeding was not. She was fearful, but not surprised. "Daughter, your faith has healed you." Our faith in Jesus Christ has healed us.

Many wonderful things are happening here at St. Francis de Sales for those of faith. We are a place, a space, where all are welcome and can come and get away for a while to be with the Lord...among those who also believe and love him.

"Eye has not seen, ear has not heard, and what has not entered the human heart, what God has prepared for those who love him," this God has revealed to us **through the Spirit,**" from St. Paul in his first letter to the Cor 2:9,10.