

13th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME; Cycle – B; June 30th 2024
Wisdom 1:13-25, 2:23-24; 2Corinthians 8:7-9, 13-15; Mark 5:21-43

Dear Sisters & Brothers,

Mark's gospel is the shortest of the four gospels. But the miracle stories in Mark are very lengthy and given in great details. For instance, in today's gospel we have two miracles woven together, which he narrates in 22 verses. Whereas, Mathew narrates these two miracles in just 9 versus which we see in chapter 9:18-26. In Mark's the miracles are spread through chapters **1-10 by which he unfolds the personality, mission, compassion, authority and power of Jesus.** And also Mark gives us 16 of such miracles which involve diverse characters.

In all the miracles two elements are found in common, such as, the faith of the beneficiaries in the healing power of Jesus and on the other hand the great compassion of Jesus towards the sick. Jesus treated all the sick with the same gentle attitude and tender love, no matter whether one was socially or ritually unclean or outcast. Coming to the first miracle we meet a woman with a pathetic situation. When we read this miracle couple great points strike our attention.

First of all we see a miserable woman. Her misery is very intense. For, she has been suffering from hemorrhages for twelve years. During this long period she became socially outcast; religiously rejected and financially broken. According to Mosaic Law a woman with hemorrhages is unclean and she was to be treated like an outcast. In other words, she could not come closer to people anywhere. So she lived in isolation and thus lost most of his friends. She was religiously outcast as she was not allowed to go to the Temple and Synagogue for worship. It is said that she spent all her wealth in treatment, paying the physicians. So financially she was broken.

Secondly, despite her miserable situation we notice the deep faith of that woman in Jesus. Definitely, she has not heard Jesus directly or witnessed any of his miracles. She may have heard something about Jesus of Nazareth. Due to the restrictions imposed on her she could not come with direct contact with Jesus and make a request. That is why she believed, **“If I but touch his clothes I shall be cured.”** She did touch the cloak of Jesus from behind and she was healed. Here we see her absolute faith in the power of Jesus. On the other hand Jesus could not but appreciate her faith and acknowledge it in public before a big crowd.

We started with the Synagogue official whose daughter was dying. He enjoyed high social and religious status in the community. As such he had no obstruction to

approach Jesus even in the crowd. He was also in a miserable condition. But like the woman he too believed that Jesus could do something for his daughter. In fact, that hope ended when the news came about the death of that girl. The next thing what he wanted was to leave Jesus without bothering him further and go home. But the encouraging words of Jesus, **“Do not be afraid, just have faith,”** gave him a slim hope.

In human point of view the Synagogue official’s case was impossible and that of the woman was rather impossible. Napoleon Bonaparte, the French Emperor believed that there isn’t anything called *‘impossible in the world.’* He wanted to remove that word even from the dictionary. But finally he was defeated and driven out of his own country. His attempt to make a comeback failed and he died in an isolated Island all alone. So he realized that everything is not possible for human being.

In fact there is only ONE in whose dictionary there is no word **‘impossible’** and that one is God. When Blessed Virgin was in a dilemma with impossibility, the angel said to her, **“Nothing is impossible for God.”** When the impossible situation falls in the hands of Jesus it just becomes possible. But we need to possess the same faith of Jairus and the woman. We need the same faith of the centurion whose servant was very ill. But he didn’t feel worthy enough to have Jesus in his house; but said, **“Lord, I am not worthy to have you enter under my roof; only say the word and my servant will be healed.** Unfortunately, sometimes we act like St. Peter who tried to walk on the water in the presence of Jesus; but seeing the rising waves he doubted and started sinking. The real test of our faith comes not during our good times; rather in our bad times. There isn’t anything wrong using the manmade facilities for our benefit, provided we allow them to work in the hands of Jesus. There can be moments in our lives too when we feel that all the doors are shut against us; but if we have faith in Jesus he will open at least a window for us. We read in **Ps 2:11b** **“Happy are all, who take refuge in God!”** Again in **Ps. 91:15**, the Lord says, **“All who call upon me I will answer; I will be with them in distress; I will deliver them and give them honor.”**