

## Reflection for the 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time

This Sunday in our Gospel Reading we hear of Jesus, Simon Peter, Andrew, James and John enter the house of Simon Peter. Upon entering the house Jesus is informed that Simon Peter's mother-in-law is laying in bed with a fever. Jesus approaches Simon Peter's mother-in-law and takes her hand, helping her up. With this helping hand from the Lord, the fever leaves her, and she waits on them. In this miracle of the healing of Simon Peter's mother-in-law there is a two-fold message. The first part of the message is the fact that a miracle has more of an impact than just the act itself. The healing of Simon Peter's mother-in-law, enables her to be able to get up and serve Jesus and the others that were present in the house. This miracle like all miracles calls for a response. The healing hand of God touched the mother of Simon Peter's wife and this lady through embracing the miracle found herself compelled to respond. She could have chosen out of free-will to have done nothing after she had received the miracle from Jesus Christ, but this was not her response. This woman of faith, who had been lifted up by our Lord and Savior chose to respond by being of service to others.

The reaction that Simon Peter's mother-in-law to the miracle that she receives from Jesus Christ can and should enable you and I, to reflect on how we daily respond to Christ working in and through us in our daily lives. Be it the reception of Holy Communion, any of the other Sacraments that we receive or Christ touching our lives through prayer, Christ is everywhere and He is touching our lives on a daily basis. May we always respond in a similar way that a woman of faith responded two thousand years ago when Christ healed her of an illness, she responded by being of service to others. May Christ in touching our lives enable us to discover ways to be of service to each other.

The second part of the two-fold message that is found in the healing of Simon Peter's mother-in-law, is the *koinonia* aspect of this healing miracle. *Koinonia* is the transliterated form of the Greek word *κοινωνία*, which refers to the concepts of fellowship, joint participation, the share which one has in anything, a gift jointly contributed, a collection, a contribution. Basically the word "*koinonia*" is used to describe the idealized state of fellowship and unity that should exist within the Church, the Body of Christ. It is important to note that the term "*koinonia*" can be confused with the related term "*communion*", which comes from the Latin word "*communio*" meaning sharing in common, and this is where the term "*Holy Communion*" comes from which refers to the "*Eucharist*", the body and blood of Christ that we receive at Mass to strength in our journey of faith. *Koinonia* is not referring to the sacrament but rather to the faithful that gather to receive the Eucharist and walk in the footsteps of Christ.

The word *koinonia* is found nowhere in the ancient Greek translation of the Old Testament, known as the Septuagint. But the Greek word *koinonia* is found 19 times in the New Testament. It is translated as "fellowship" 12 times, "sharing" 3 times, "participation" 2 times, and "contribution" 2 times. This word is used in the New Testament to help describe the community of the faithful that develops around Jesus and continues to exist after His death and resurrection. This community is still with us today in the form of the Church.

Our Gospel reading this Sunday does not use the word "*koinonia*" the actions of all present in the house of Simon Peter clearly shows that this group had developed a bond that could best be described with the Greek word "*koinonia*." What we see in our Gospel reading this Sunday is not just the healing miracle of Jesus, but we see a community of believers that have a deep concern for one of their own that has a health issue. The solution of the collective group is to inform Jesus about the issue. Jesus responds by healing the person and the person responds by being of service to others. Clearly this whole moment and the whole Gospel reading this Sunday embraces the idea and concept of "*koinonia*." In closing as you and I choose to react to God working in and through us in the same manner that Simon Peter's mother-in-law did we help "*koinonia*" become more of a reality in our lives and in our community.