

Reflection for the 13th Sunday of Ordinary Time

Today we have a rather long Gospel reading taken from the Gospel of Mark chapter 5 verses 21 thru 43. With such a long reading it feels like we have entered back into the Season of Lent and are no longer in Ordinary Time. But here we are on the 13th Sunday of Ordinary with a Gospel reading that is 22 verses long. It almost seems like this last Sunday of June the Church is encouraging the Deacon or Priest that is sharing the homily this Sunday to, in the middle of the Summer, share a rather long homily. The subject matter of the Gospel reading this day also seems to also be encouraging the homily to be long. In our Gospel Reading today we hear of not one but two healing miracles that Jesus preforms.

Jairus, one of the synagogue officials, requests that Jesus comes to his house because his 12-year-old daughter is at the point of death. Jesus wastes no time he goes to the synagogue officials house to lay hand on his sick daughter that she might get well and live. On the road to Jairus' house a woman that had been ill for 12 years touches the cloak of Jesus and she is cured. Once Jesus speaks with the woman that had touched His cloak, He prepares to continue His journey to the house. Before Jesus can continue His journey people from the synagogue officials house arrive with the news that the little girl had passed away. Jesus informs Jairus not to be afraid but to have faith. When Jesus and Jairus arrive at the house, Jesus takes the hand of the child of twelve and says "*Talitha koum*" which means "Little girl, I say to you arise!" The girl arose and then she walked around, Jesus informed her parents that they should get her something to eat.

It is only in the Gospel of Mark that we are informed that the little girl was 12, which is the same number of years that the woman had been ill. Also, the number 12 connects with the 12 tribes of Israel and the 12 Apostles. There can be a message found in the fact that the little girl was 12 years old, and that the woman had an illness for 12 years. The woman being the older of the two that receive a miracle from Jesus represents the people of Israel, the 12 tribes. The little girl of 12 represents the Church, the 12 Apostles. The message we can take from the 12-year-old girl and the woman who suffered with an illness for 12 years is that Jesus came into the world for all peoples and all times. He came for the people of Israel, and He came for the gentiles. There is no one that Jesus did not come for. This is a message that we find carried forward by the actions of the Apostles, the early Church and to this very day by every true follower of Christ.

May we also discover a message in the fact that the little girl of 12 was given food to eat by her parents once she returned to life. The Church has been given much by the 12 tribes of Israel. The Old Testament, and much more has been shared with us by God's chosen people. The 12 Apostles were all Jewish and they brought the new covenant to all peoples. As people of the new covenant, we are blessed to learn from and build on what had come before us.

From one generation to the next we as a people of faith have reached out to all the corners of the earth sharing the good news with all peoples. This is our calling that we can see expressed by Christ today in our Gospel reading. This calling has been embraced by every generation since Christ walked the earth, one like us in all things but sin. As we take up this calling today, we follow the generations that have gone before us that knew it was not just enough for us to live our faith but that we must share our faith with the world at large. It is not enough for us to share our faith with family and friends, we must be willing to reach beyond our comfort zone and share our faith with even the stranger that we meet. In our Gospel reading this Sunday we see that Christ took the time to share the good news with everyone young or old, and rich or poor. May Christ be an example to us that we are called for bring this good news to everyone.