

Monday 14th in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (Mt 9,18-26): While Jesus was speaking to them, an official of the synagogue came up to him, bowed before him and said, «My daughter has just died, but come and place your hands on her, and she will live». Jesus stood up and followed him with his disciples. Then a woman who had suffered from a severe bleeding for twelve years came up from behind and touched the edge of his cloak. For she thought, «If I only touch his cloak, I will be healed». Jesus turned, saw her and said, «Courage, my daughter, your faith has saved you». And from that moment the woman was cured.

When Jesus arrived at the official's house and saw the flute players and the excited crowd, He said, «Get out of here! The girl is not dead. She is only sleeping!». And they laughed at him. But once the crowd had been turned out, Jesus went in and took the girl by the hand, and she stood up. The news of this spread through the whole area.

«Your faith has saved you»

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Today, the liturgy of the Word invites us to admire two splendid manifestations of faith. So splendid were they that they deserved to move Jesus Christ's heart —immediately!— provoking his reaction. Our Lord does not allow himself to be won over in generosity!

«My daughter has just died, but come and place your hands on her, and she will live» (Mt 9:18). We could almost say that a strong faith as such can “oblige” God. But, He likes that kind of obligation. The other testimony of faith of today's Gospel is also equally impressive: «If I only touch his cloak, I will be healed» (Mt 9:21). Both Jesus' reaction and the end result of this dialogue of faith are quite radical:

«Courage, my daughter, your faith has saved you» (Mt 9:22).

We could even affirm that God gladly lets our good faith to “manipulate” him. What, instead, He does not admit is that we try to tempt him with our mistrust. This was the case with Zechariah, who asked evidence from Gabriel, the archangel: «Then Zechariah said to the angel, ‘How shall I know this?’» (Lk 1:18). The Archangel did not shrink an inch: «And the angel said to him in reply, ‘I am Gabriel, who stand before God (...). But now you will be speechless and unable to talk until the day these things take place, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled at their proper time’» (Lk 1:19-20). And so it was.

It is He who wants to “oblige and commit himself” with our faith: «So I say to you, Ask, and it will be given you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened» (Lk 11:9). He is our Father and He does not want to refuse anything that is convenient for his children.

But we must entrust our petitions to him with confidence; confidence and naturalness with God require treatment: to trust somebody we must know him; and to know him we must treat him. Thus, «faith provokes prayer, and when prayer arises it makes faith strong» (St. Augustine). Let us not forget the praise the Virgin Mary deserved: «Blessed is she who has believed that what the Lord has said to her will be accomplished!» (Lk 1:45).