

Tuesday 4th in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (Mk 5,21-43): Jesus crossed to the other side of the lake and while He was still on the shore, a large crowd gathered around him. Jairus, an official of the synagogue, came up and seeing Jesus, threw himself at his feet and asked him earnestly, «My little daughter is at the point of death. Come and lay your hands on her so that she may get well and live».

Jesus went with him and many people followed, pressing from every side. Among the crowd was a woman who had suffered from bleeding for twelve years. She had suffered a lot at the hands of many doctors and had spent everything she had, but instead of getting better, she was worse. Since she had heard about Jesus, this woman came up behind him and touched his cloak thinking, «If I just touch his clothing, I shall get well». Her flow of blood dried up at once, and she felt in her body that she was healed of her complaint. But Jesus was conscious that healing power had gone out from him, so he turned around in the crowd and asked, «Who touched my clothes?». His disciples answered, «You see how the people are crowding around you. Why do you ask who touched you?». But he kept looking around to see who had done it. Then the woman, aware of what had happened, came forward trembling and afraid. She knelt before him and told him the whole truth. Then Jesus said to her, «Daughter, your faith has saved you; go in peace and be free of this illness».

While Jesus was still speaking, some people arrived from the official's house to inform him, «Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the Master any further?». But Jesus ignored what they said and told the official, «Do not fear, just believe». And He allowed no one to

follow him except Peter, James and John, the brother of James.

When they arrived at the house, Jesus saw a great commotion with people weeping and wailing loudly. Jesus entered and said to them, «Why all this commotion and weeping? The child is not dead but asleep». They laughed at him. But Jesus sent them outside and went with the child's father and mother and his companions into the room where the child lay. Taking her by the hand, he said to her, «Talitha kumi!» which means: “Little girl, get up!”. The girl got up at once and began to walk around. (She was twelve years old.) The parents were astonished, greatly astonished. Jesus strictly ordered them not to let anyone know about it, and told them to give her something to eat.

«Daughter, your faith has saved you; go in peace and be free of this illness»

Fr. Francesc PERARNAU i Cañellas

(Girona, Spain)

Today, the Gospel presents us with two of Jesus' miracles that speak of the great faith of two entirely different persons. Whether Jairus —an official of the synagogue— or that poor ailing woman, both displayed much faith: Jairus is certain Jesus can cure his daughter, while that good old woman knows that just touching Jesus' robe will be more than enough to deliver her from her very serious bleeding. And, Jesus, because both are persons with a strong faith, grants them what they wanted.

The woman who thought she was unworthy of Jesus' attention, who did not dare to bother neither the Master nor those influential Jews, was the first one. Noiselessly, she came up behind him and, softly touching Jesus' cloak, she “draws out” her cure, and she can feel how her body is completely healed. Jesus, who knows what has happened, does not want to let her go without saying to her: «Daughter, your faith has saved you; go in peace and be free of this illness» (Mk 5:34).

To Jairus, Jesus is asking an even stronger faith. As God did with Abraham in the

Old Testament, Jesus will ask Jairus to have faith against hope, a faith in impossible things. Jairus had been told the terrible news his little daughter had just died. We can easily imagine the deep anguish and horrible pain he must have felt in that very moment, and perhaps the temptation to despair. But Jesus, who had also heard the news, tells him: «Do not fear, just believe» (Mk 5:36). And, like those ancient patriarchs, hopelessly believing, he could see how his beloved little girl was resurrected by Jesus.

Two great lessons in faith for us. Jairus and the woman suffering a serious bleeding, along with so many others, from the Gospel pages, speak to us of the need to have an unmovable faith. We can make ours that beautiful evangelic exclamation: «O Lord, I believe; help my unbelief» (Mk 9:24).