

Sunday, June 28, 2015

Meditation and Questions for Reflection or Group Discussion

Mass Readings:

1st Reading Wisdom 1:13-15; 2:23-24

2nd Reading: 2 Corinthians 8:7, 9, 13-15

Responsorial: Psalm 30:2, 4-6, 11-13

Gospel: Mark 5:21-43

Putting Our Faith in Jesus' Healing Love, Mercy, and Compassion

Please, come. (Mark 5:23)

Imagine what Jairus must have felt as he approached Jesus—his impatience, his urgency, his frustration and anguish. His daughter was dying. Why had he waited so long? Did he regret not coming sooner? His daughter was all he could think about. Her precarious state overshadowed everything else.

What a relief! Jesus agreed to come with him. But would they get there in time? We've got to hurry! Then came a roadblock. A sick woman reached out and touched Jesus, and everything came to a standstill. Why would Jesus let himself be interrupted? There was no time to investigate. At least the disciples were sympathetic, asking, "How can you ask who touched you?"

Then, far away, Jairus glimpsed members of his household coming toward him. Were they happy? He couldn't tell at first. But as he read their body language, his own shoulders slumped. It was as he feared. They were too late. His daughter was dead.

But Jesus kept on going. The mourners at his house mocked him, but Jairus followed Jesus into his daughter's room. Then he saw Jesus raise his girl from death. Astounding! Jesus was big enough. His power was wide enough to take care of everything.

Looking at this story from Jairus' point of view shows us how anxieties can overshadow every aspect of our lives. Like Jairus, we can be so caught up in worry that anxiety trumps everything else. But Jesus has enough healing power, enough mercy and compassion, to go around. He hasn't forgotten you, even when you feel he is delayed. He can care for you even as he takes care of everyone else.

So come and ask Jesus for his help, and then trust him to act on his own schedule. Maybe go one step further, and pray for all the other people he's helping. Jesus is big enough to care for us all!

"Jesus, I trust your ways. Come and pour your healing on everyone who needs you!"

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Questions for Reflection or Group Discussion

1. The first reading begins with these astounding words, “God did not make death.” How would you answer someone who asked you the meaning of this Scripture verse?
2. The first reading goes on to say that “God formed man to be imperishable; the image of his own nature he made him. But by the envy of the devil, death entered the world, and they who belong to his company experience it.” What is your understanding of these words? What kind of “death” do these words describe: physical death, spiritual death, or both? What is the difference between physical death and spiritual death?
3. In the Responsorial Psalm, the psalmist speaks of the goodness and faithfulness of the Lord and the reasons why he proclaims: “forever will I give you praise.” What are some examples from your own life when the Lord, “did not let my enemies rejoice over me,” “preserved me,” had “pity on me,” showed me his “good will,” and “changed my mourning into dancing”?
4. In the second reading, St. Paul speaks of “the gracious act of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, for your sake he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich.” In what ways did Jesus become “poor” for you? In what ways by his poverty, you became “rich”?
5. The second reading also speaks of sharing our “abundance” from the Lord with others. What part does the social justice teachings of the church play in your life, especially those on caring for the poor and needy? What more could you do to make these teachings a greater reality in your life?
6. In the Gospel reading, we see a great demonstration of Jesus’ power and authority to heal the sick and raise the dead. The synagogue leader, Jairus, and the women afflicted with hemorrhages approach Jesus with great faith. What role, if any, do you think their expectant faith played in the healings that occurred?
7. In his book, “The Practice of Healing Prayer: A How-to Guide for Catholics,” Francis MacNutt says that praying with expectant faith means trusting in God’s love, goodness and mercy when we pray. What are the situations in your life that sometimes make it difficult to pray to Jesus with expectant faith? What are some fruits in your life of praying with expectant faith?
8. Take some time now to pray and ask the Lord for the grace to have faith in his great love when you pray for yourself and for others, especially those who need his healing touch. Use the prayer at the end of the meditation as the starting point.

[The discussion questions were created by Maurice Blumberg, a director of partner relations for **The Word Among Us Partners**, (<http://www.waupartners.org/>); a ministry of **The Word Among Us** (www.wau.org) to the military, prisoners, women with crisis pregnancies or who have had abortions, and college students. He is also a member of the National Service Committee Council of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal. Maurice was also the founding Executive Director of the **National Fellowship of Catholic Men**, for which he is currently a Trustee (<http://www.nfcmusa.org/>). He can be contacted at mblumberg@wau.org or mblumberg@aol.com.]