

Third Sunday of Great Lent

The healing of the Hemorrhaging Woman – Luke 8:40-56

“Touched by Faith” (Regnum Christi Meditation for Tuesday of the Fourth Week in Ordinary Time - [Audio Version](#))

Note - The Gospel read in the Maronite Church on the third Sunday of Great Lent is Luke 8:40-56 while the Audio version and the meditation here are based on a synoptic Gospel for the healing of the hemorrhaging woman - Mark 5:21-43

Mark 5:21-43 When Jesus had crossed again (in the boat) to the other side, a large crowd gathered around him, and he stayed close to the sea. One of the synagogue officials, named Jairus, came forward. Seeing him he fell at his feet and pleaded earnestly with him, saying, “My daughter is at the point of death. Please, come lay your hands on her that she may get well and live.” He went off with him, and a large crowd followed him and pressed upon him. There was a woman afflicted with hemorrhages for twelve years. She had suffered greatly at the hands of many doctors and had spent all that she had. Yet she was not helped but only grew worse. She had heard about Jesus and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak. She said, “If I but touch his clothes, I shall be cured.” Immediately her flow of blood dried up. She felt in her body that she was healed of her affliction. Jesus, aware at once that power had gone out from him, turned around in the crowd and asked, “Who has touched my clothes?” But his disciples said to him, “You see how the crowd is pressing upon you, and yet you ask, ‘Who touched me?’” And he looked around to see who had done it. The woman, realizing what had happened to her, approached in fear and trembling. She fell down before Jesus and told him the whole truth. He said to her, “Daughter, your faith has saved you. Go in peace and be cured of your affliction.” While he was still speaking, people from the synagogue official’s house arrived and said, “Your daughter has died; why trouble the teacher any longer?” Disregarding the message that was reported, Jesus said to the synagogue official, “Do not be afraid; just have faith.” He did not allow anyone to accompany him inside except Peter, James, and John, the brother of James. When they arrived at the house of the synagogue official, he caught sight of a commotion, people weeping and wailing loudly. So, he went in and said to them, “Why this commotion and weeping? The child is not dead but asleep.” And they ridiculed him. Then he put them all out. He took along the child’s father and mother and those who were with him and entered the room where the child was. He took the child by the hand and said to her, “Talitha koum,” which means, “Little girl, I say to you, arise!” The girl, a child of twelve, arose immediately and walked around. (At that) they were utterly astounded. He gave strict orders that no one should know this and said that she should be given something to eat.

Introductory Prayer: Lord, who should I turn to first but you? You have given me another day. This gift calls me to come to you first, to hear you first. My faith tells me there can be nothing better than to follow your plan; my hope is to bring you into my life and to other people; my love wants to be fuller and better — it wants to be like yours, Lord.

Petition: Grant me the grace of deeper trust and faith in all moments of hardship.

1. "...afflicted with hemorrhages for twelve years." When problems are prolonged, or reach fever-pitch levels, we can get the mistaken impression that God has lost interest. Somehow he seems no longer moved by our misery. All the signs say he has forgotten us, abandoned us and left us hanging. But God is only seemingly absent. He is creating a new set of circumstances wherein we can experience him at a wholly new level. The long, hard and persevering fight to walk in hope enables God to bring about greater fruits of holiness in us. In the woman with the hemorrhage and in Jairus, father of a dying daughter, we must contemplate a mature and vibrant faith, observing how it conquers pessimism and transcends the cold calculations and superficial tones of their peers. Truly this is the first miracle we see that Jesus has worked for them, and the most important one.

2. "And they ridiculed him. Then he put them all out." The dismal voices of his "friends" come to the father. Though they have seen the miracle of the woman with the hemorrhage, they coldly say, "Your daughter is dead. Be realistic. It is no use to go on." True, in the name of realism, we can dismiss hope and cooperation with Christ's action in our life. We can ridicule Christ whenever he wants to work in mystery and outside our human limits. We can be tempted to abandon trust in God in the name of reaffirming control over our world. "Let's be realistic," we say. "It will never work." These phrases veil a weak faith, a poor faith, a sterile or compartmentalized faith that works only when everything makes sense to us, when everything is easy. Where there is this lack of faith, Christ cannot work.

3. "If I but touch his clothes, I shall be cured." Many say they are near Christ, yet few are acknowledged by Christ as close to him. Many were brushing against him that day, many were verbally praising him, many were serving him, but only one touched him and got his full attention. Why? Only one made an act of unconditional faith. What is the secret? How can we really get his attention, truly speak to his heart? None are closer than those who trust him, who humbly depend on him, and who wish to live from him. The woman's unconditional faith was open to whatever would happen, whatever would be Christ's response. Those who suffer and support themselves patiently with faith and prayer experience new levels of union with Christ.

Conversation with Christ: Lord let me use hardships to build newer levels of trust and intimacy with you. Open my heart to seek you on your terms.

I do not ask you for happiness or sorrow,
Health or sickness,
Riches or poverty,
Freedom or slavery,
Goods or evils;
For goods are misfortunes if you do not come with them,
And misfortunes are goods if they arrive with you.
For goods without you, what good would they be?
And misfortunes with you, are they not the best goods?

Resolution: I will acknowledge the presence of Christ in all the difficulties of today.