



Holy Gospel of Jesus Christ according to Saint Matthew 9: 18-26.

While Jesus was speaking, an official came forward, knelt down before him, and said, "My daughter has just died. But come, lay your hand on her, and she will live." Jesus rose and followed him, and so did his disciples. A woman suffering hemorrhages for twelve years came up behind him and touched the tassel on his cloak. She said to herself, "If only I can touch his cloak, I shall be cured." Jesus turned around and saw her, and said, "Courage, daughter! Your faith has saved you." And from that hour the woman was cured. When Jesus arrived at the official's house and saw the flute players and the crowd who were making a commotion, he said, "Go away! The girl is not dead but sleeping." And they ridiculed him. When the crowd was put out, he came and took her by the hand, and the little girl arose. And news of this spread throughout all that land.

Matthew 9:18-26.

Introductory Prayer:

Jesus, you are my savior and redeemer; I believe that you want to hear from me. I approach you in confidence and offer this prayer for those who are afraid to draw near to you.

Petition:

Grant me, Jesus, a deeper faith in your power to heal me and my loved ones.

1. Awaiting Our Move:

We note that the official's faith moves Jesus to action. Remarkable! The Son of God accommodates a mere creature, due to a show of faith. So often we see problems around us and expect God to solve them without any effort on our part. God knows our problems better than we do (cf. Matthew 6:8). Yet, he sometimes doesn't act until he sees an act of faith on our part. The official showed such faith. It was extraordinary, after all, for him to approach Jesus in front of other people and ask point-blank for a miracle. Do I have such confidence when I approach Jesus in prayer? Is my faith strong enough to ask him for something extraordinary?

2. Touching Moment:

The woman suffering hemorrhages had great faith in Jesus, too. In her case, she didn't express it in words. Rather, she expressed it in a deed, by discreetly touching Jesus' cloak. That kind of faith speaks volumes. It helps if our words are joined with actions. Petitions don't always suffice. We have to act, to move, to leave our comfort zone, in order to approach Jesus. Prayer is good; prayer plus action gives God even more fertile ground to work with. How can I complement my prayer life? Can I help my pastor with a special project, for instance?

3. Mourning Has Broken:

In Our Lord's time it was not uncommon to have professional mourners show up when someone died. Jesus' comment that the official's daughter was merely sleeping brought ridicule on him. Who needs mourners if the young lady is alive? We can be like professional mourners at times, resigned to the evil and death around us. We might throw up our hands and think we can hope for nothing better. We might even be tempted, like the mourners, to ignore Our Lord's reassuring presence. We might think: "What! Me, be a saint?" Or: "Me, called to the priesthood or consecrated life?" Or: "Do you really expect us to handle another child right now?" Luckily for us, Christ is undeterred. He comes to bring us life, to lead us out of sin, to make us more generous. In a word, he comes to call us to holiness. Do I resist such a call?

Conversation with Christ:

The official and the suffering woman show an admirable faith. I want to have that same kind of faith, Lord. Sometimes I feel paralyzed by my problems, so much so that I find it hard to approach you confidently. Increase my faith and sense of hope. Let me live as if I really believe that you rule the world.

Resolution:

I will offer up a sacrifice (or a visit to the Blessed Sacrament or an act of charity) for a special intention.