



from him Jesus turned round in the crowd and said, 'Who touched my clothes?' His disciples said to him, 'You see how the crowd is pressing round you and yet you say, "Who touched me?"' But he continued to look all round to see who had done it. Then the woman came forward, frightened and trembling because she knew what had happened to her, and she fell at his feet and told him the whole truth. 'My daughter' he said 'your faith has restored you to health; go in peace and be free from your complaint.'

While he was still speaking some people arrived from the house of the synagogue official to say, 'Your daughter is dead: why put the Master to any further trouble?' But Jesus had overheard this remark of theirs and he said to the official, 'Do not be afraid; only have faith.' And he allowed no one to go with him except Peter and James and John the brother of James.

So they came to the official's house and Jesus noticed all the commotion, with people weeping and wailing unrestrainedly. He went in and said to them, 'Why all this commotion and crying? The child is not dead, but asleep.' But they laughed at him. So he turned them all out and, taking with him the child's father and mother and his own companions, he went into the place where the child lay. And taking the child by the hand he said to her, 'Talitha, kum!' which means, 'Little girl, I tell you to get up.' The little girl got up at once and began to walk about, for she was twelve years old. At this they were overcome with astonishment, and he ordered them strictly not to let anyone know about it, and told them to give her something to eat.

■ The Gospel of the Lord.

Shorter form Mk 5: 21-24, 35-43

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A MATTER OF FAITH

Within the story of the healing of Jairus' daughter, Mark sandwiches the account of the woman cured by touching Jesus' cloak. The setting of a large crowd is where we see Jairus, a synagogue leader, fall at Jesus' feet and beg repeatedly for him to come and lay his hand on his daughter, twelve years of age, so she may be saved [σώζω] and live. In contrast, within this crowd, behind Jesus, we see an unnamed woman who, haemorrhaging for twelve years, suffered much despite seeking help from many physicians, and is worse off economically and physically. We hear this woman's thoughts 'If I but touch his clothes, I will be saved [σώζω].' Owing up, she also falls before him. Jesus calls her 'My daughter' and tells her that her faith has saved [σώζω] her.

Immediately the message comes that the girl is dead but Jesus says, 'Don't be afraid; only have faith'. Jesus goes with only three close disciples, no crowd, and finds the child is not dead but asleep. The mourners are turned out and Jesus takes her hand saying 'Talitha cum'. She arises and walks.

The story of the unnamed woman informs the audience then and now how we are saved through faith. Jesus' encouragement not to be afraid, and only to have faith, is intended for us also in face of all that comes to us, even death. The Wisdom reading stresses that 'death was not God's doing' and the Gospel reveals God's saving grace in Jesus.



Dr Rosemary Canavan

FIRST READING

Wis 1: 13-15; 2: 23-24

A reading from the book of Wisdom.

It was the devil's envy that brought death into the world.

Death was not God's doing, he takes no pleasure in the extinction of the living. To be – for this he created all; the world's created things have health in them, in them no fatal poison can be found, and Hades holds no power on earth; for virtue is undying. Yet God did make man imperishable, he made him in the image of his own nature; it was the devil's envy that brought death into the world, as those who are his partners will discover.

■ The word of the Lord.

RESP PSALM

Ps 29: 2, 4-6, 11-13. R. v. 2

R. I will praise you, Lord, for you have rescued me.

1. I will praise you, Lord, you have rescued me / and have not let my enemies rejoice over me. / O Lord, you have raised my soul from the dead, / restored me to life from those who sink into the grave. **R.**

2. Sing psalms to the Lord, you who love him, / give thanks to his holy name. / His anger lasts but a moment; his favour through life. / At night there are tears, but joy comes with dawn. **R.**

3. The Lord listened and had pity. / The Lord came to my help. / For me you have changed my mourning into dancing, / O Lord my God, I will thank you for ever. **R.**

SECOND READING

2 Cor 8: 7, 9, 13-15

A reading from the second letter of St Paul to the Corinthians.

Your abundance should supply their want.

You always have the most of everything – of faith, of eloquence, of understanding, of keenness for any cause, and the biggest share of our affection – so we expect you to put the most into this work of mercy too. Remember how generous the Lord Jesus was: he was rich,

but he became poor for your sake, to make you rich out of his poverty. This does not mean that to give relief to others you ought to make things difficult for yourselves: it is a question of balancing what happens to be your surplus now against their present need, and one day they may have something to spare that will supply your own need. That is how we strike a balance: as scripture says: The man who gathered much had none too much, the man who gathered little did not go short.

■ The word of the Lord.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

cf. 2 Tim 1: 10

Alleluia, alleluia! / Our Saviour Jesus Christ has done away with death / and brought us life through his gospel. / Alleluia!

GOSPEL

Mk 5: 21-43

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark.

Young girl, I say to you, arise.

When Jesus had crossed in the boat to the other side, a large crowd gathered round him and he stayed by the lakeside. Then one of the synagogue officials came up, Jairus by name, and seeing him, fell at his feet and pleaded with him earnestly, saying, 'My little daughter is desperately sick. Do come and lay your hands on her to make her better and save her life.' Jesus went with him and a large crowd followed him; they were pressing all round him.

Now there was a woman who had suffered from a haemorrhage for twelve years; after long and painful treatment under various doctors, she had spent all she had without being any the better for it, in fact, she was getting worse. She had heard about Jesus, and she came up behind him through the crowd and touched his cloak. 'If I can touch even his clothes,' she had told herself 'I shall be well again.' And the source of the bleeding dried up instantly, and she felt in herself that she was cured of her complaint. Immediately aware that power had gone out