

SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER THE PENTECOST

The Rev. Robert G. Eaton, Interim Rector
All Saints' Episcopal Church, San Diego, CA
Jairus' Faith

Abstract: *The following sermon is not complete text, but includes the text and NOTES from which Fr. Eaton delivered his sermon on July 1, 2018, for All Saints' Parish Church, San Diego. For this reason, an abstract of the Sermon is included in the webpage posting.*

The Gospel reading from Mark 5:22-24,35b-43 is a powerful story of healing, in this case of Jairus' 12-year old daughter, who is dead by the time Jesus and her father arrive back at the home. The story contains all the elements of every healing story, in the sense of faith, hope and compassion. The healing stories do not follow a common template, however. Each one must be read for the details. The sermon begins with an exposition of the story with its particular details. As explicated, the meanings of the story and its details were given. Finally, Fr. Eaton chose one important element of the story, in this case who it was who initiated the faith and hope necessary to facilitate Jesus' raising of the little girl from death. This one element of the story was then applied to each of us, that being that each of us needs to have at least one person we can trust to immediately take our plight to Jesus with faith to "bring Jesus to us", that we too will be healed. This cannot be presumed; we must initiate the request before we too are "on death's bed."

Intro: Please be seated.

We see hope, even if driven by desperation. We see compassion, even if seemingly (in our time constructs) delayed. We see faith, even in the most impossible of situations. Sounds much like St Paul prioritizing the work of the Spirit in us: Faith, Hope and Love.

Prayer: Lord, open my lips, and let my mouth proclaim your praise. Amen.

Sermon: The richness of the gospel lesson of the raising of Jairus' daughter can be tasted. And there is even more when the story is placed back into the narrative of Mark with the healing of the woman who had the 12 year hemorrhage. But it is sometimes too much for us to hear and consider in the confines of a sermon. A bible reading, maybe 3 or 4 times, and a bible study and discussion among others, and guided teaching is often what brings it all out.

For today, though, to go along with the metaphor of culinary richness, we will take our finger and do what our mothers we weren't supposed to do, and take a good swipe of the frosting from this powerful, amazing, rich story. But just from one side of the cake.

Our story begins with and continues with several details that help us see how we might fit into the story ourselves.

July 1, 2018

From Mark 5:22-24, 35b-43, the text of which you can follow along again from your liturgy booklets.

One of the **leaders of the synagogue** named Jairus came **and, when he saw Jesus, fell at his feet** and begged him **repeatedly**, "My little daughter is at the point of death. **Come and lay your hands on her, so that she may be made well, and live.**"

Unique situations: Synagogue leader coming to Jesus

:Fell at his feet

:Begged REPEATEDLY: Come lay your hands on her SO THAT she may be made well, and live.

Question for the healing story: Who initiated the hope in Jesus? Who initiated the faith that would be necessary?

The little girl? Of course not

Jesus? No

No. The father, on behalf of his daughter.

Continuing -

He went with him. And a **large crowd** followed him and pressed in on him.

Jesus goes. This is his compassion, and it will show itself a few more times in this story before we are done.

This is where the story of the woman with the hemorrhage comes in. And after her healing, Jesus, even before he can take a step forward to resume his walk to Jairus' home, has an obstacle placed before him. Well, actually the obstacle was placed before JAIUS.

Some people came from the leader's house to say, "**Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the teacher any further?**"

But overhearing what they said, **Jesus said to the leader of the synagogue, "Do not fear, only believe."** [AND THEN] **He allowed no one to follow him except Peter, James, and John, the brother of James.**

Jesus here infuses the faith of Jairus with his own faith. Jairus has done what the woman with the hemorrhage had done, and brought faith and hope to Jesus. Jesus now will not let the cold icy water of LACK of faith be poured out on Jairus. Yes Jesus could go do it himself with or without. But it is Jairus who has paved the way to Jesus, and now Jesus wants Jairus to pave the way back to the little girl who has now died.

Does not the news of death stop any one of us in our tracks, perhaps of making that pastoral friendly visit one more time? Of praying for healing, one more time? Of considering that life done and over?

Jesus is not done yet, with walking with the faith and hope of Jairus. Unfortunately.

July 1, 2018

When they came to the house of the leader of the synagogue, he **Jesus** saw a commotion, people weeping and wailing loudly. When he had entered, he said to them, "Why do you make a commotion and weep? The child is not dead but sleeping." And they laughed at him.

Then he put them all outside, and took the child's father and mother and those who were with him, and went in where the child was.

He took her **by the hand** and said to her, "Talitha cum," which means, "Little girl, get up!" And immediately the girl got up and began to walk about (she was twelve years of age). At this they were overcome with amazement. He strictly ordered them that no one should know this, and **told them to give her something to eat.**

Touching a dead body is not kosher. But what if you are touching the dead body of a person that you know is going to be resurrected? How does THAT fit into the law?

And the story finishes with the compassion that God, Father Son and Holy Spirit have for each of us, for our daily lives, for our daily needs, of the whole person, body, mind and spirit.

There is so much to learn and to hold onto here.

Again, who was it that exhibited faith in the story? It was the father of the little girl.

I learned a long time ago that just because a person was lying in a hospital bed did not mean that they were going to be seen as having the time available for the strengthening of their faith. In fact, it is the opposite. We can provide a prayer list since they have nothing else to do, but our sicknesses and illnesses are when we are at our lowest ebb in spiritual fervor and strength. We need so much the gentle visit, the reading of psalms and other scripture, and the hand-held prayer - by anyone, not just an ordained person. And when communion does come, it is even more of the building up of faith and strength.

So the faith was going to be in someone else. And it is in the only person there, Jairus and her mother.

What a powerful moment for that faith and hope to meet the compassion of Jesus. Even if driven by a deep desperation of love and connection.

But I want you to see one thing out of this richness for today.

You need someone in your life who you can trust will go to Jesus on your behalf when you can't. This cannot be presumed at all.

In the same way you choose someone to be your health advocate when establishing end of life directions in an advance directive, for example, so you need to have someone in your life who will make the trek to Jesus, who will go despite the objections of others, who will absolutely rely upon even beg Jesus to bring you healing, and will continue until Jesus comes with you so to speak. Someone who will continue in faith and hope for your healing and your raising despite lack of faith in others.,

July 1, 2018

Someone who will facilitate Jesus taking you by the hand.

Who is that person?

Find them, ask them, encourage them, teach them if need be to understand faith and hope in Jesus for themselves while you still have your breath.

What a sense of fellowship.

What a faith.

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

July 1, 2018