

### **Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time B2018**

All the readings of this Sunday talk about the importance of life. They show that God is the source of human life and our wellbeing. They invite us to entrust our life to God and to hope from him our eternal salvation.

The first reading of the book of Wisdom talks about the reality of death. It shows that God did not create death because everything he made from the beginning was destined to immortality. It also reveals that the presence of death in the world is due to evil, but not to the intent of God.

What is behind this text is the affirmation of the bounty of God and the goodness of his creation. There is also the affirmation of the fragility of human existence that is constantly threatened by death. Another is about the affirmation of the immortality of man as corresponding to God's intent manifested in his creation. The last idea is related to the origin of death as coming from the evil one.

This text allows us to understand what is at stake in today's Gospel as Jesus heals the sick woman and raises the dead girl. First of all, the Gospel relates the request for healing of one of the officials of the synagogue whose daughter was sick. Then, it reports the case of a woman who was suffering with hemorrhages for twelve years and who never was healed in spite of having spent all her fortune by visiting the physicians.

After that, the Gospel shows how she approached Jesus from behind, in the middle of the crowd, touched his vestments and was cured of her disease. The Gospel reports also on the reaction of Jesus once he realized that power had gone out from him and on Jesus' address to the woman how her faith has saved her.

Finally, the Gospel reports on the raising by Jesus of the daughter of the synagogue official and the astonishment of the people who witnessed the event.

What do we learn from today's readings? Today I want to talk about the importance of life and the reality of death. In fact, we all want to live abundantly; we all want to have a long and successful life on earth. For that reason we do everything in order to stay healthy and in good shape.

However, in spite of all our success and our efforts to be in good shape, we all know by experience that, soon or later, we have to face the reality of death. In fact, today's readings tell us that both life and death are known to God. Of course God is not responsible for the existence of death because it was not part of his initial plan, but, at least he knows that it affects human life.

Now, here is the question: It is true that we want to live, but what type of life is worthy of being lived, that with God or without him? In other words, if God is the source of human life, how shall we lead our life on earth? To such question St Paul has given an answer: "I have been crucified with Christ, and the life I live now is not my own; I still live my human life, but it is a life of faith" (Ga2: 20).

According to these words, a life worthy of being lived is that of faith in Jesus Christ. That is why in the Gospel, Jesus insists in both cases on the importance of faith. To the official, Jesus says, "Do not be afraid, just have faith". To the hemorrhagic woman, he says, "Daughter, your faith has saved you".

Faith is understood here not as knowledge of the things of God, but as a trust in God. That is why the hemorrhagic woman, in a simple gesture of trust, came from behind in the crowd and touched Jesus with the firm conviction of obtaining the healing. And what she wanted with her whole heart, happened to her instantaneously. The same is true with the official of the synagogue whose daughter Jesus raised from death. Because they both trusted Jesus, they obtained what they were looking for.

However, we have always to remember that the healing of the hemorrhagic woman, as well as Jesus' raising of the daughter of Jairus, had a character of exemplarity. What does it mean? It means that through them, Jesus wanted to give us an example so that we come to understand he is the master of both life and death.

In that sense, though those individuals were healed and restored to life, they eventually one day died. Jesus saved them in order to show us that he is the master of life and death. What he has done with these two people, he can also do with anybody of those who trust him.

On the other hand, Jesus wanted also to show us that human life is transitory. The only life that will never end is life with God in heaven. Meanwhile, physical death has become part of human life and it is impossible to live on earth without envisaging the possibility of dying.

However, it does not mean that because we are awaiting eternal life and the resurrection of the dead at the end of our pilgrimage on earth, therefore the things of this world lose their interest. To think so would be a mistake. In fact, the things of this world are given to us so that we use them in such a way that they prepare us for the world to come.

That is why when Jesus heals, his intention is to let us taste in anticipation the joy of heaven. So, we understand that the healing of the hemorrhagic woman and the raising of the little girl had the character of exemplarity.

As long as we are still on earth, we have to help each other as much as we possibly can in alleviating the suffering of one another until the day we will all share in the resurrection of Jesus in heaven. Let us pray, then, asking the Lord to increase our faith in him, in spite of the present situation of suffering in which we find ourselves. May he increase our trust in him! God bless you all!

**Wisdom 1: 13-15; 2: 23-24; 2 Corinthians 8: 7,9, 13-15; Mark 5: 21-43**

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Contact: [www.mbala.org](http://www.mbala.org)

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