



## 7TH SUNDAY OF LUKE

November 6

### THE GOSPEL READING

**Luke 8:41-56**

[Jairus' Daughter Raised, a Woman Healed]

*At that time, there came to Jesus a man named Jairus, who was a ruler of the synagogue; and falling at Jesus' feet he besought him to come to his house, for he had an only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she was dying. As he went, the people pressed round him. And a woman who had had a flow of blood for twelve years and had spent all her living upon physicians and could not be healed by anyone, came up behind him, and touched the fringe of his garment; and immediately her flow of blood ceased. And Jesus said, "Who was it that touched me?" When all denied it, Peter and those who were with him said, "Master, the multitudes surround you and press upon you!" But Jesus said, "Some one touched me; for I perceive that power has gone forth from me." And when the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling, and falling down before him declared in the presence of all the people why she had touched him, and how she had been immediately healed. And he said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace." While he was still speaking, a man from the ruler's house came and said, "Your daughter is dead; do not trouble the Teacher any more." But Jesus on hearing this answered him, "Do not fear; only believe, and she shall be well." And when he came to the house, he permitted no one to enter with him, except Peter and John and James, and the father and mother of the child. And all were weeping and bewailing her; but he said, "Do not weep; for she is not dead but sleeping." And they laughed at him, knowing that she was dead. But taking her by the hand he called, saying, "Child, arise." And her spirit returned, and she got up at once; and he directed that something should be given her to*



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*eat. And her parents were amazed; but he charged them to tell no one what had happened.*

## **THE SERMON**

Twelve years tell the story of two daughters: a child, and an adult. Both encounter Jesus and come back to life as they are touched by Christ, who is the Giver of life. Jairus is described as “a ruler of the synagogue,” which means he was not a priest but the administrator of the local Jewish congregation. He was not yet a follower of Jesus, but undoubtedly he had heard of “Jesus of Nazareth, anointed with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all . . . for God was with Him” (Acts 10:38).

The Jewish authorities rejected Jesus and were Jairus’ superiors and employers, and as such, Jairus would risk his position by coming to meet Jesus. Yet, amid the greatest pain a parent can encounter – the death of one’s own child – Jairus overcomes his fear and seeks the compassion and power of Christ, not being afraid of the repercussions this might have had. Jairus comes to Jesus, falls at His feet, and begs Him for help. The hope of having his daughter – his only daughter (in Greek, *μονογενής*, the same word used for the Only Begotten Son of God) – was worth all things. Jairus’ pain gave the occasion for great faith in a time of desperation; he believed Jesus could save his daughter, and the Son of God rewarded his faith. Jesus recognizes his faith and has compassion – so he responds to the call and starts making his way to Jairus’ home.

On the other side of this story, there is another daughter of God. Like Jairus’ young daughter, this older daughter remains nameless. Yet, twelve years prior, about the same time when Jairus’ daughter was born, this woman became ill in a way that made her ceremonially unclean, according to Jewish law, and unable to worship in the temple. She began to die slowly. The physicians could save neither the child nor the woman. We are told that “for twelve years she had spent all her living upon physicians and could not be healed by anyone.” As Jairus did not consider the repercussions and took a leap of faith to reach out to Jesus, this woman does the same. She boldly takes a leap of faith and reaches out to Jesus, touching the hem of His garment because of her great faith in a time of desperation.

The Lord notices great faith and responds in a personal and compassionate way. He stops to attend to the one who placed all her faith and hope in Him. “Who was it that touched me?” He says. He asked not because he did not know but to honor her faith. Peter said, Master, everyone is touching You. There is a crowd pressing on You as You walk. But Jesus said, someone special, with great faith, touched Me. This was not a mere rubbing of shoulders with the multitude, but someone who believed in Him for eternal life

and placed all her hopes in Him. Jesus instantaneously heals her the minute she touches Him because of her faith. "I perceive that power has gone forth from me," the Lord says; and when the embarrassed woman realized God the Son was calling her, she came trembling and fell before Him.

"Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace." Because of His great love, the Lord Jesus calls her daughter and saves her through her faith. Saint Ephraim the Syrian says, "Faith is the means by which anyone now may enter the family of Jesus, and peace is the crown of victory she receives because of her faith." An ancient hymn of the Church says, "Then a woman, weak and timid, touched his sacred garment's hem: instant was his blessed healing, and the pallor left her cheek, as the hemorrhage she had suffered through so many years was stopped."

At the same time, Jesus heals the woman, messengers come to Jairus with the word that his daughter has died. Jairus was there with Jesus and witnessed the healing of the woman, but the messengers said, "Your daughter is dead; do not trouble the Teacher anymore." However, Jairus also had the same faith that the woman had to "trouble the Teacher" in the face of hopelessness, and he wanted Jesus to still go with him. "Do not fear," Jesus said, "only believe, and she shall be well." In Greek, the text says literally, "only believe and she will be saved."

The entire passage – both daughters, sicknesses, and resurrections – hinged upon this: unwavering faith resulting in new life. Faith is the opposite of fear. "Do not fear," Jesus said. The Lord said that many times in the Gospels to His beloved ones. When the disciples were in a storm, afraid they were going to sink, they saw Jesus walking on water toward them in the middle of the night, and they thought it was a ghost. Immediately Jesus spoke to them and said, "Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid." (Mat 14:26). When Jesus was transfigured before His disciples, they fell on the floor with their faces down. Jesus came and touched them, saying, "Get up and do not be afraid." (Mat. 17:7). When Jesus appeared to his disciples, risen from the dead, they took hold of His feet and worshiped him, and he said to them, "Do not be afraid; go and take word to my brethren (Mat 28:9-10).

Out of faith, the woman with the flow of blood had overcome her fear and touched his garment. Jesus healed her. Now Jesus tells Jairus not to fear. Therefore, with faith, Jairus accompanied Jesus to the house, and the Lord came to the child. "Do not weep, for she is not dead but sleeping." In Christ, death is defeated, because He destroyed death by death. In Christ, death is like momentary sleeping; as Jesus later said, "Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I go that I may wake him up." (John 11:11). As the woman had touched Jesus, now Jesus touches the child, takes her by the hand, and says, "Child, arise!" When the Word of God, Who is the Son of God, speaks, life defeats death. Immediately her spirit returned, and she rose from the dead.

The child became a type of Christ, risen from the dead, as the woman with the flow

of blood also became a type of humanity, wounded after the Fall and restored by Jesus. Both daughters were saved by faith – one, by her own faith, the other, by the prayers and faith of another (her father). We are also the sons and daughters of Christ, who, by our faith, and by the faith and prayers of the Saints in heaven and on earth, are touched by the Lord and restored unto life.

Let us trust Christ without fear, even in the darkest moments of life. He calls us sons and daughters. Let us pray for one another as well. All it takes is for us not to be afraid but only believe in Him, who rose from the dead. The Lord loves us and always responds to our cries for help, even when facing the darkest situations.

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