

THIRTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
Year B: Wis 1:13-15; 2:23-24; Ps 30; 2Cor 8:7, 9, 13-15; Mk 5:21-43
June 27, 2021
Fr. David Pignato

An interesting detail in the Gospel passage we just heard is that when the poor, sick woman reached out and touched the cloak of Jesus, Jesus felt that “*power had gone out of [H]im,*” just as the woman “*felt in her body that she was healed of her affliction.*” Jesus felt healing power flowing *out* of Him, and the woman felt healing power flowing *into* her. And isn’t this exactly what Christ did for the whole world, when He came to save us? He brought divine power from Heaven to heal our fallen human nature and to restore us to friendship with God. Through Christ, through the Incarnation, God was pouring healing power into the world, and this was the whole reason why God became man.

From Heaven, God the Father saw a human race in need of healing, especially from the effects and destruction of sin, and so He sent His only Son into the world on a mission of healing. And when “*the Word became flesh*” (Jn 1:14), and God became man, He lowered Himself to the level of our condition, in order to heal us. We call this the divine condescension, by which God came down to the level of our lives and brought Heaven to earth. And this meant that He denied Himself and deprived Himself of the glory that was rightfully due to His divinity.

St. Paul described this divine condescension in his famous Christological hymn, when he wrote, “*[T]hough he was in the form of God, [Christ Jesus] did not regard equality with God something to be grasped. Rather, he emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, coming in human likeness; and found human in appearance, he humbled himself, becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross*” (Phil 2:6-8). St. Paul says the same thing in the second reading today, when he writes, “*For you know the gracious act of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, for your sake he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich*” (2Cor 8:9).

Christ emptied Himself and poured Himself out like a libation (cf. 2Tim 4:6). In the event of His Incarnation, throughout the years of His redemptive work, and especially in His Sacred Passion, Christ was pouring Himself out for our sake. He Who was rich was making Himself poor, so that we might become rich. All the while, He was letting divine healing power flow through and out of Himself, so that it could flow into the people He came to save. This is just one of the reasons

we admire Christ and never cease to honor Him. At every Mass, we recall how Jesus poured Himself out for us and for our salvation.

During His ministry, Jesus healed many bodies, such as we just heard in the Gospel. He cured people of leprosy, gave sight to the blind and even raised the dead. He knew, as we heard in the first reading, that “*God did not make death, nor does he rejoice in the destruction of the living. For he fashioned all things that they might have being*” (Wis 13-14). God does not like to see us suffer from physical ailments or disease or the fear of death. All of this was not part of God’s plan for us from the beginning, but was rather a consequence of the Fall. And so, when Jesus came among us, He was filled with compassion for those who suffered from physical ailments.

But, although Jesus did heal bodies during His mission of redemption, He came primarily to heal our *souls*, which were so much more in need of redemption. He saw souls lost in sin which forfeited the gift of eternal life, and He wanted to free souls from the power and slavery of sin, so that they could experience and live the joy and happiness of holiness. *Conversion* is what Christ primarily came to bring, and the divine healing power that flowed out of Him was primarily to heal our souls with the grace and power to resist sin. Throughout His life, Christ poured Himself out, all the way to the Cross, to free us from sin. He made Himself poor, so that we could become rich – rich in the mercy and grace of God, rich in the ability to resist sin, and rich in the joy of eternal life.

And, although Christ has accomplished His mission of redemption and ascended into Heaven, He continues to pour Himself out for us, through the Church and the sacraments that He left behind as faucets of His grace to the world. From God the Father, through the Incarnation of His Son, and through the sacraments of His Body the Church, the grace and power of God continues to pour into the world to lift up our fallen human nature and give us the ability to resist sin. “[By] the gracious act of our Lord Jesus Christ, ... though he was rich, for [our] sake he became poor, so that by his poverty [we] might become rich” (2Cor 8:9). May we also ask for, welcome and accept, the riches of Christ by converting our lives to Him who poured Himself out for us and for our salvation.