

THIRTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

LECTIONARY #98

READING I Wisdom 1:13-15; 2:23-24

A reading from the Book of Wisdom

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;
 and there is not a destructive drug among them
 nor any domain of the netherworld on earth,
 for justice is undying.
 For God formed man to be imperishable;
 the image of his own nature he made him.
 But by the envy of the devil, death entered the world,
 and they who belong to his company experience it.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Psalm 30:2, 4, 5-6, 11, 12, 13 (2a)

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

I will extol you, O Lord, for you drew
 me clear
 and did not let my enemies rejoice
 over me.
 O Lord, you brought me up from the
 netherworld;
 you preserved me from among those
 going down into the pit.
 Sing praise to the Lord, you his
 faithful ones,
 and give thanks to his holy name.

For his anger lasts but a moment;
 a lifetime, his good will.
 At nightfall, weeping enters in,
 but with the dawn, rejoicing.
 Hear, O Lord, and have pity on me;
 O Lord, be my helper.
 You changed my mourning into dancing;
 O Lord, my God, forever will I give
 you thanks.

dikaiosyne (justice) reflects the biblical sense of the word—that is, being in right relationship with God and engaging in right behavior toward others. Therefore, it should not be confused with the contemporary judicial term “justice,” which can confuse our understanding of this passage.

Working toward the conclusion, then, that right relationship with God is “undy- ing,” the reading contrasts death with life. God and the right relationship with God are placed firmly on the side of life, drawing a lesson from Genesis’ account of creation, in which God created us in his image. Still,

although God is firmly grounded on the side of life, the final verses acknowledge that death is possible. Alluding now to Genesis 3, the story of the fall, Wisdom notes that Adam and Eve’s human sin facilitated the entry of death into the world through “the envy of the devil.” This envy, and the death it leads to, stands in stark contrast to God’s intention for humankind: to exist, to have a wholesome and imperishable nature, and to be made in God’s image. In other words, God created human beings for eternal righteousness.

READING I

The Book of Wisdom, an anonymous Greek apocry- phal work composed between 200 BC–AD 100, is part of the wisdom literature of the Catholic Old Testament. It was written to encourage diaspora Jews to stand firm in their wisdom tradition. Today’s reading comes from the first part of Wisdom, which focuses on righteousness (*dikaiosyne* in Greek) and immortality (*athanatos* in Greek). Indeed, Wisdom 1:1 calls the reader to love righteousness and joins it with the assertion in today’s reading that “justice is undying.” In this passage, the term

For meditation and context:

Don’t lose any of the last line. This is an important warning: evil still lurks in our world. Use a comma after “company.”

God’s creation is always made for good. Let your tone reflect this goodness; it is encouraging to be reminded of this.

READING II 2 Corinthians 8:7, 9, 13-15

A reading from the second Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians

Brothers and sisters:

As you excel in every respect, in faith, discourse, knowledge, all earnestness, and in the love we have for you, may you excel in this gracious act also.

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. Not that others should have relief while you are burdened, but that as a matter of equality your abundance at the present time should supply their needs, so that their abundance may also supply your needs, that there may be equality.

As it is written:

Whoever had much did not have more, and whoever had little did not have less.

GOSPEL Mark 5:21-43

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark

[When Jesus had crossed again in the boat to the other side, a large crowd gathered around him, and he stayed close to the sea. One of the synagogue officials, named Jairus, came forward. Seeing him he fell at his feet and pleaded earnestly with him, saying, "My daughter is at the point of death."

sion rather than confrontation. First, he seeks to persuade them by praising their faith, discourse, and knowledge, and he even recalls his love for them. All of this, Paul says, is reason enough for them to "excel in this gracious act also." He further builds his case by citing the example of Jesus, who was "rich" (divine) and became "poor" (human) for their sake. This image resonates powerfully with Philippians 2:6-11, which portrays Jesus surrendering his divinity to assume poor humanity. This image of the "poor Christ" (in humanity and the Corinthians is often quite heated, regarding the collection he opts for persuasion. Although Paul's correspondence with Jerusalem. support the impoverished mother Church Christian solidarity by collecting money to encourage his communities to show Throughout his missionary travels, Paul selection for the community in Jerusalem. Corinthian community to complete a col- oncle with the community. Less well known are the chapters where Paul appeals to the father's bodily posture shows his desperation. The tone of his request should reflect his anguish.

READING II

2 Corinthians is well known for Paul's attempts to rec- oncle with the community. Less well known are the chapters where Paul appeals to the Corinthian community to complete a col- selection for the community in Jerusalem. Throughout his missionary travels, Paul encourages his communities to show Christian solidarity by collecting money to support the impoverished mother Church in Jerusalem. Although Paul's correspondence with the Corinthians is often quite heated, regarding the collection he opts for persuasion.

Jairus = jair-uh or jay-i-ruhs

Read the responsorial psalm for today. In this Gospel narrative, Christ's healings do what the psalmist proclaims, changing mourning into dancing.

Proclaim the quote strongly so that the assembly clearly understands that Paul is supporting his exhortation with Scripture.

This is an exhortatory text, a strong urge for compliance. Paul first compliments the people of Corinth before asking for their generous financial support. List the community's virtues slowly.

Corinthians = kohr-IN-thee-uhnz

Please, come lay your hands on her that she may get well and live."
He went off with him,
and a large crowd followed him and pressed upon him.]

There was a woman afflicted with hemorrhages for twelve years. She had suffered greatly at the hands of many doctors and had spent all that she had. Yet she was not helped but only grew worse.

She had heard about Jesus and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak.

She said, "If I but touch his clothes, I shall be cured."

Immediately her flow of blood dried up. She felt in her body that she was healed of her affliction.

Jesus, aware at once that power had gone out from him, turned around in the crowd and asked, "Who has touched my clothes?"

But his disciples said to Jesus, "You see how the crowd is pressing upon you, and yet you ask, 'Who touched me?'"

And he looked around to see who had done it. The woman, realizing what had happened to her, approached in fear and trembling.

She fell down before Jesus and told him the whole truth. He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has saved you. Go in peace and be cured of your affliction."

[While he was still speaking, people from the synagogue official's house arrived and said, "Your daughter has died, why trouble the teacher any longer?"

Disregarding the message that was reported, Jesus said to the synagogue official, "Do not be afraid, just have faith."

He did not allow anyone to accompany him inside except Peter, James, and John, the brother of James. »

Add a slight pause after "come" and "her."

Read "immediately" with emphasis. Illness is easily—and completely—cured by God's power. Increase your pace slightly to show excitement.

The narrator interprets what Jesus is thinking. Deliver Jesus' question with a surprised, upward inflection.

Deliver the disciples' lines with a slightly scoffing tone. Given the crowd, they think Jesus is wasting his time.

Don't minimize her fear. She has violated religious prohibitions (based on her condition). Her life has consisted of the inability to touch others. Note, this is not moral impurity. Despite the obstacles she faced, her faith remains strong.

Attention is now turned to the ending of the first miracle story. Be clear in your proclamation so that the assembly recognizes the shift between stories.

Deliver "Do not be afraid" with a calm but strong voice. The distraught parents must hear his reassurances.

GOPEL

of the poor Christ united with humanity, in other words, the Corinthians should embrace mutual concern as they support their poorer fellow Christians in Jerusalem.

Last Sunday we saw that Mark moved from Jesus' teaching ministry into a more active phase, demonstrating his power over the forces of nature, a power he shared with God. All of this occurred in Gentile territory. While in that same territory, Jesus confronted and vanquished the fierce Gerasene demoniac (Mark 5:1-20), showing yet another aspect

of his divine power. In today's Gospel, Jesus resumes when Jesus journeys to Jairus' home and heals Jairus' daughter. While Jesus' healing power is essential in each account, the faith of the woman and of Jairus is a key theological point. Though it is difficult to ascertain exactly what disease afflicts the woman, it is clear that she was not always bleeding, for she would have died. Still, her ongoing bleeding makes her infertile, and also in a constant state of ritual impurity, both of which were serious social liabilities. Furthermore, she is getting worse, perhaps even approaching death. Overcoming the physical barrier of

When they arrived at the house of the synagogue official,

he caught sight of a commotion,

people weeping and wailing loudly.

So he went in and said to them,

“Why this commotion and weeping?
The child is not dead but asleep.”

And they ridiculed him.

Then he put them all out.

He took along the child’s father and mother

and those who were with him

and entered the room where the child was.

He took the child by the hand and said to her, “*Talitha koum,*”

which means, “Little girl, I say to you, arise!”

The girl, a child of twelve, arose immediately and

walked around.

At that they were utterly astounded.

He gave strict orders that no one should know this

and said that she should be given something to eat.]

[Shorter: Mark 5:21–24, 35b–43 (see brackets)]

Use a voice of condemnation. Jesus’ response is decisive in the face of their ridicule.

Talitha koum = tal-uh-thuh KŌM or tah-lee-thah KŌM

Practice the Aramaic phrase until you are comfortable announcing it loudly. A strong commanding voice is needed.

Again, stress “immediately.” God’s performative words do not get any argument from laws of nature.

the crowd, and the religious barrier of ritual impurity, she touches Jesus’ clothing and is healed. As both she and Jesus are aware of this healing, she is struck with fear (that is, divine awe) and gives witness to it. Jesus commends her by calling her daughter, praising her faith, sending her away in peace, and declaring her permanently healed. Her faith is paralleled by that of Jairus, who is called to believe despite the sad news from his home. The fact that he accompanies Jesus is a sign of his faith. The story concludes when Jesus enters Jairus’ home and heals/raises the girl to life.

The narratives are striking in that they feature two females: a woman suffering for twelve years, and a twelve-year-old girl. Does twelve connect them? In the case of the girl, first called daughter, later, child (*paidion* in Greek), and finally, “little girl”/young woman (*korasion* in Greek), twelve indicates that she is of marriageable age. Having saved both of these “daughters” from death, perhaps Mark is asserting that Jesus delivers them to life, as both would now be able to bear children, indicating God’s favor and blessing. What is clear is that the Gospel affirms that God’s power

stands on the side of life and rescues the vulnerable from death. S.L.