

THE POWER OF TOUCH

MARK 5:21-43



The story of the cure of the woman with the haemorrhage takes place while Jesus is on his way to the house of Jairus, where he restores Jairus' daughter to life.

The woman with the haemorrhage is suffering unbelievably. She has been bleeding for twelve years. She has gone from one doctor to another, spending all her money on useless treatments. She is broke and desperate.

In Jesus' day, blood was considered to be a person's life-force. People who bled were avoided and isolated out of fear of ritual contamination. So, together with the haemorrhaging, the woman was socially isolated within her own community. She had no life and no future.

She has heard about Jesus and, summoning up her faith, she touches his clothes. She is cured instantly. She touches him and she is restored to health. Her life has been given back to her. ■

SAY

"Lord, I thank you for the gift of faith. Help me to keep on believing and trusting in you. Amen."

DO

Think about how you touch those close to you – your family, friends, school mates, work colleagues. How healing is your touch? Embrace someone close to you today, let them feel the warmth of your love.

LEARN

Jesus' healing power can overcome all barriers that isolate and imprison us. Jairus was isolated by being part of the religious establishment that opposed Jesus. Yet his love for his daughter triggered within him the courage to cross that barrier and save his daughter. The haemorrhaging woman was isolated by her illness. Yet her desperation for a life in the community led her to touch Jesus in faith. Both were freed.

What are the barriers to freedom in your life? What might it mean for you to hear Jesus say to you today: "Do not fear; just keep on believing"?

REFLECT

Jesus knew the importance of physical touch. Remember how the fever leaves Peter's mother-in-law as soon as Jesus touches her. His touch alone is sufficient.

Over and over again in the Gospels, the same story is repeated. Jesus meets someone who is ill or has a disability. He touches them, and their health is restored. The blind see, the crippled walk, haemorrhages are cured, even the dead are restored to life. All are made new again through the power of his healing touch.

Jesus's words alone would have done the job but he is tactile. Deliberately tactile. He knows how powerful and healing physical touch can be. Even to touch Jesus's clothes, as the woman with the haemorrhage does, is sufficient to be made whole again.

Jesus's use of the power of touch is an opportunity for us to reflect on how we touch others. It reminds us that we touch

each other in many different ways – not just physically, but through word and gesture also. It reminds us that touch can be positive or negative. It can build up or knock down; it can be constructive and life-enhancing or destructive and life-diminishing.

We can touch someone with a warm hug or embrace or we can touch someone with a slap or a blow or a beating. The statistics tell us that domestic violence and physical and sexual abuse are major problems in our society.

We can touch someone with a word of encouragement or gratitude or love. Or we can touch someone with a word of contempt or anger or abuse. We know that words have the power to wound as deeply as any physical assault. Bullying in schools and in the workplace is endemic, facilitated by social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter.

We can touch someone with a gesture that shows respect or appreciation or thanks. A thumbs up, a smile, a nod. Or we can touch someone with a gesture that

shows anger or contempt or impatience. Think of the incidents of road rage or of the snarl of disapproval of someone who is perhaps socially inept or that we look down on.

Jesus' touch gave people life. All he said and did gave people life. He gives us life even now in the Eucharist and the sacraments.

And that's our challenge – to invite Jesus to touch and transform us, in the Eucharist, in the sacraments, in our life of prayer.

Our challenge also is to bring the gentle touch of Jesus to all whose lives touch ours.

That all our acts of touch will be acts of love and tenderness and affection. That all the words we use will be gentle and encouraging and constructive. That all the gestures we make will be supportive and uplifting and positive. That all the ways in which we touch others will be life-enhancing and grace-filled, as Jesus's actions were. ■

PARISH OF DROMORE

Rev Feidhlimidh Magennis Tel: 07702665123

Parish website: www.stcolmans.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/stcolmans

St Vincent de Paul Helpline: 07738838187

Rev Dr Frank Rice, Deacon - Mobile: 07746-842977

Parochial House Dromore - Tel: 02892-692218

Parish email address: dromoreparish@dromorediocese.org

Diocesan Safeguarding Officer: Patricia Carville 07789 917741

Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

All Masses and ceremonies are broadcast live on Facebook (www.facebook.com/stcolmans)

Sunday masses

All Saints, Ballela: 9.45 am

St Colman's, Dromore: 11.00 am

Weekday masses

Tues & Fri – 9.30 am, St Colman's, Dromore

Thurs – 7.00 pm, All Saints, Ballela

Sat – 10.00 am, St Colman's Dromore, followed by Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament

NB – There is no mass on Monday morning

Ballela Anniversaries

Sun 27: Evelyn McAleenan

William, Margaret, John & Donald McCusker

Thurs 1: Kathleen McGrath

Sun 4: None

Dromore Anniversaries

Sun 27: Armelle Davenport

Agnes & James Gribbin

Sun 4: None

Offertory promise collection £671.50

Blood Transfusion Service

The next blood donation session(s) will be held in:

Dromore Baptist Church,

Maypole Hill,

Dromore

BT25 1BQ

On Tuesday 29th June from 1pm-4pm & 5pm – 8pm.

All sessions are now by appointment only.

Please call 08085 534 653 to book.

St Vincent de Paul

Do you need financial or practical assistance or even a friendly chat? The St Vincent de Paul Society is here to help. You can contact us through our telephone number 07738838187

27th June 2021

Ballela Community Group

Are pleased to announce that we will be holding a **Treasure Hunt with Afternoon tea, Sun 27th June 2-4pm**. We will be having our afternoon tea in the school or weather permitting we can set tables up outside. We ask everyone to wear masks when entering the school and sit at allocated tables. If you wish to take part in the Treasure Hunt but do not want to stay for tea you can bring a box with you and we will fill it with delicious homemade scones, tray bakes and buns. If you wish to just come along for Afternoon tea and do not want to take part in the Treasure Hunt you will be very welcome. Admission is £5 per Adult and children are Free.

Lough Derg 2021

Lough Derg regrets that it will not be possible in 2021 to reopen Station Island for the Traditional Three Day Pilgrimage or even for the autumn programme of Day Retreats. Lough Derg will again offer the opportunity to **"Do Lough Derg from wherever you are"** on 3rd – 5th July. The Prior, Fr La Flynn, will do the three-day pilgrimage on the island during these days, while some of the island staff will also participate from St Mary's Church, Pettigo. Others can join via a live webcam like. To register or for further information, please email info@loughderg.org
The outdoor **Pilgrimage on the Lough Shore Pilgrim Path** will also be available as the summer goes on. Further information from Lough Derg office 0(0353) 71 9861518 or www.loughderg.org.