

**Faith and Confidence**    Fourth Week in Ordinary Time    Tuesday, January 30, 2018    8:15 AM    2 Sm 18:9-10, 14b, 24-25a, 30—19:3;    **Mk 5:21-43**    (So it would seem it's too late now to pray. But that's precisely when we have to pray more because God draws out of evil, good.)

Today's reading is of course a series of **two actual stories, and they are about faith and trust.** In the case of the **woman with a hemorrhage**, she touched Jesus' cloak with faith believing that she would be cured and was, even though many people actually were touching, but they were not **touching him with faith.** They maybe were touching him with curiosity, but not faith—there is a difference. **This faith that the woman had was an inner desire for God's healing and a kind of confidence.**

In the case of **Jairus**, his daughter had already died and he was verging on despair, and Jesus said, no, what you really need is faith. Well faith in what? Well he didn't say. Actually Jairus had faith because he came to Jesus in the first place and said, "Come to my daughter and lay your hands on her so she will get well." So **he had faith, until she died.** And this is when he needed a different kind of faith. So there are times in our lives when we turn to God and we want help for something. And then it seems that help has been denied or our prayers haven't been answered, and then we are prone to give up. And this is what this is about; **this is about not giving up because nothing is beyond the scope of God.**

So, "**Do not be afraid.**" Another translation is: "Fear is useless." **Fear is such a common component in people's lives.** They are afraid of the unknown. They are afraid of death. They are afraid of sickness. They are afraid of suffering. They are afraid of pain. They are afraid of losing. It's almost an inexhaustible list of things people are afraid of, and yet none of this helps at all. **What is needed is faith and confidence** like the woman with the hemorrhage, but even more so, because in this case this poor girl has already died. **So it would seem it's too late now to pray. But that's precisely when we have to pray more because God draws out of evil, good.**

Now in this one case Jesus revived the girl. That is not ordinarily how God draws good out of evil. God always draws good out of evil if we let him, if we really are confident, if we have faith; but it's usually not the revival of someone who has already died. But there's different kinds of life. And yet there are certain experiences of death that are very hard to endure. And Jesus did say, **"Blessed are they who mourn for they shall be comforted."** There is something about mourning. There is something about sorrowing. There is something healthy about it. David cried about Absalom, his rebellious son who died. Jesus wept over Jerusalem. Jesus wept at the death of Lazarus. One of his principal followers Mary Magdalene has given as the word maudlin; that comes from Magdalene, because she was a person who wept profusely. The Zohar says that the revelations of God always come with great tears. The saints talk about the gift of tears. **This is all part of life: mourning and weeping and sorrowing. But we have to recognize that we will be comforted. It's not pointless.** We are not Buddhists; Buddhists don't weep because they think it's pointless. We believe it is not pointless because we will be comforted, and God can draw good out of every evil. And ultimately the greatest good is the good of the resurrection from the dead.

Now this girl had not experienced that any more than Lazarus had. She just came back; she was just revived for a while, until later on she would have to die again. **But the ultimate good God draws out of life is the resurrection of the dead in which we are refashioned into the pattern of Christ himself. And with this kind of faith, with this kind of confidence, we do not have to be afraid of anything.** And that's what Mark is trying to teach us.