

Thirteenth Sunday of the Year

Focus

A Bible open at today's Gospel, together with a candle and a handprint on a piece of paper or a plate of sand (to represent the healing touch of Jesus).

Introduction

Faith is a mystery. It is a gift from God that opens our hearts and minds to help us accept and believe the truth revealed by Jesus. It takes us where reason and common sense cannot go, and helps us to discover what lies beyond our simple understanding.

Gloria

Gospel Acclamation

Light the Gospel candle and sing Acclamation 4.

Gospel

A reading from the Gospel of St Mark (5:21-43)
(See page 383.)

Reflection

Why was Jairus so upset when he came to ask Jesus for help?

As a father, Jairus was beside himself with worry because his little girl was dangerously ill. He had probably already tried whatever medical help there was, but they did not have the modern medicines we have today to relieve her fever and fight the disease.

Why did he go in search of Jesus?

Jairus was an important official at the synagogue in Capernaum, a fishing village where Jesus had spent some time preaching and healing the sick. He came to a man of whom he probably knew very little. He was ready to try anything to save his little girl, and he believed that Jesus was the only hope he had left.

How did Jesus respond to this desperate father's cry for help?

He set off at once without hesitation as Jairus led him to his house.

What happened on the way there?

A woman in the crowd that was following Jesus was desperate to be healed, and she reached out and touched him as he hurried past. At once the illness that she had suffered for twelve years was healed.

When Jesus stopped and spoke to her what did he say?

He told her that her remarkable faith had made her well. Because she truly believed that Jesus could help her, with a simple touch, that's exactly what happened.

What sad news did Jairus receive before he reached home?

A servant came to tell him that he was too late because his daughter was already dead.

How did Jairus react when Jesus asked him to have trust and faith in him?

Having received news that his daughter was already dead, Jairus might have chosen to think that all was lost, but he didn't. He had just witnessed the power of faith in allowing Jesus to heal. He knew that Jesus could heal those who believed in him, so was it possible that he could restore life too? He had asked Jesus for his help because he believed that he could save his daughter. He faithfully led Jesus back to his home and the room where his little girl lay.

What did Jesus do next?

He reached out and gently touched the little girl's hand, before commanding her to get up. Jairus had faithfully asked Jesus to help, and his response revealed the love and power of God as the little girl opened her eyes and sat up.

What can these stories teach us?

If we have faith and believe in God's ability to work in the world, then no situation or suffering is beyond his healing touch. Just as Jesus responded to the needs of Jairus and the sick woman, so he will respond to our needs if we but ask and are ready to trust and believe in the depth and power of his love.

Activity

Cut out large letters which together spell out the words 'Do not be afraid, trust me and have faith.' Let the children colour the letters and help them to arrange them on a colourful banner around the central picture of Jesus curing the little girl.

Intercessions

As brothers and sisters in one loving family, together let us pray to our heavenly Father:

We pray for an end to the suffering of those who are poor and exploited.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for an end to hatred, fear and prejudice in our world.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for all who teach and share the Christian faith.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for the sick and all who struggle with pain.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Knowing that our heavenly Father is listening, in the silence of our hearts let us share our own unspoken prayers with him.

Silence

Loving Father,
increase our faith and change the lives of all who believe and trust in your saving love. We make these and all our prayers through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Do not be afraid,



trust me and have
faith.