Spirituality
Pencil Preaching



by Pat Marrin

View Author Profile
patrickjmarrin@gmail.com.

Join the Conversation

Send your thoughts to *Letters to the Editor*. Learn more

January 30, 2023
Share on BlueskyShare on FacebookShare on TwitterEmail to a friendPrint



“Daughter, your faith has saved you” (Mark 5:32).

Heb 12:1-4; *Mk 5:21-43*

This compact, double healing by Jesus of a woman suffering from hemorrhages and the raising of a girl who dies on the threshold of puberty speak to us of the power of

faith, the importance of touch and the mystery of the Incarnation.

The woman's affliction would have rendered her "unclean" according to some purity standards, yet she risks public humiliation and expulsion by pressing into the crowd to try and touch the cloak of Jesus as he passed by. Despite the mob surrounding him, Jesus feels power go out from him. A miracle has occurred without his active invitation, emphasizing dramatically what he tells many who are healed: "Your faith has healed you."

Jesus proceeds from this encounter to the house of Jairus, encouraging him not to let fear overcome his faith, which is essential to the miracle that is about to occur. As before, Jesus incurs contamination by touching the dead girl, but with her parents and his three closest disciples gathered around her bed, he recalls the girl from death to new life: "Little girl, I say to you, arise!"

Jesus, whose own body previews the promise of the new Creation, emanates life, and in these two miracles, a woman suffering from menstrual bleeding is healed by touching his clothing, and a girl on the threshold of her first menstrual flow as a woman is summoned back to life by his touch. Both healings exceed the power of the law, revealing that in Jesus, grace more than law is how we come to know God.

If prayer sometimes seems a purely intellectual exercise, this amazing story reminds us that what we ought to pray for is the chance to touch and be touched by Jesus. His Incarnation signals our own. Our flesh is destined for intimate union with the body of Christ. What we experience now sacramentally — especially in the Eucharist, in caring for one another and as members of the church – is a real encounter even if hidden. In every act of loving service and self-sacrifice we are meeting Jesus intimately. When we embrace him in faith, we are in touch with God and living the joy of the Gospel.