

FEBRUARY 7, 2021
Sunday of the 5th Week in OT
Mark 1: 29-39

“HEALING LOVE OF JESUS.”

“There is the funny story about a woman listening to her pastor preach a Sunday morning sermon about Simon Peter’s wife’s mother, ill with a fever. Since it was a boring sermon the woman left the Church after the Mass, feeling somewhat unfulfilled. Consequently, she decided to go to Church again that day, out in the country where she had grown up. When she arrived, she discovered to her dismay that her pastor had been invited to be the substitute priest and again during the Mass he preached on the Gospel of the day about Peter’s mother-in-law being ill with a fever. Believing that there was still time to redeem the day, the woman decided to go to the hospital chapel in the evening. As you may have guessed, her pastor was assigned to say the evening Mass there, and he preached the same sermon on Peter’s wife’s mother and her fever. Next morning, the woman was on a bus riding downtown and, wonder of wonders, her pastor boarded that bus and sat down beside her. An ambulance raced by with sirens roaring. In order to make conversation, the pastor said, “Well, I wonder who it is?” “It must certainly be Peter’s mother-in-law,” she replied. “She was sick all day yesterday.”¹

One of the greatest manifestations of Jesus’ love to all is His healing ministry. His healing love has no boundaries or nationality, anyone who approached Him, He healed. The two blind men, the paralytic man who was brought by his four loving and concern friends, lepers, and those who were possessed by demons, and more.

In the First Reading, we heard about the sorrow of Job filled all his life, all dear to him were taken away: his family, health, friends, and properties. But despite these miseries, he firmly holds on to his faith, surrender and trust God. He patiently waited for the Lord to heal him and restore everything according to God’s will. He did not doubt God in his misfortunes

¹ www.stories4homilies.co

and sufferings, he humbly asked the Lord not to take it away from him but gave him the necessary strength to carry it out. At the end, he was healed, and given 'normal' life again.

"The first reading is tough to hear and we admire Job. We talk of 'the patience of Job'. Job is the example and the hero of depression. He just had it bad. All had gone wrong and he felt no good, no hope, no meaning. He went through all of the depressions people have, but somehow kept that glimmer of light alive. He never totally lost God, and God never lost him. Depression is a huge illness. Many suffer; many are affected. Treatment can be of help, and the listening times of friends as well as therapy is healing. There are many helps on the human level. There is the help also of faith and prayer at times. And the help of someone who, listens, sympathises, doesn't judge nor give easy cures. Love from God never ends even though it may not appear near just now. This is the Jesus of the gospel – bringing the grace of healing, of freeing from any evil, of constant love."²

Jesus is the Divine Healer, a Healing Doctor who preached not only by words and examples but by His touch. He healed a lot of people as indicated in our gospel for today: the mother-in-law of Peter and those who gathered around the door. They were all healed because Jesus gave them hope and strength amidst struggles and difficulties. This is the message of Jesus to us today: we will be healed in all our sufferings and infirmities, trust, believe, hold on, and surrender everything to Him. Let us identify ourselves on the attitude of Peter's mother-in-law, that is, serving Jesus and others after she was healed. As He uses counselors, spiritual directors, doctors, friends, and even strangers to be instruments of healing, we are also called to the healing ministry of Jesus. Let us not forget to thank Jesus and those people who take care of us when we are down, depress, and sick, and do the same for others. When we are ready to serve others and focus on things outside of ourselves, that's the time we can say our own healing process is completed.

"A few years ago, in Sweden, a nurse working in a government hospital was assigned to an elderly woman patient. This patient was a tough case. She had not spoken a word in three

² www.catholicireland.net

years. The other nurses disliked her and tried to avoid her as much as they could. Basically, they ignored her. But the new nurse decided to try “unconditional love.” The elderly woman patient rocked all day in a rocking chair. So, one day the nurse pulled up a rocking chair beside the lady and just rocked along with her and loved her. Occasionally, the nurse would reach over and gently touch and pat the hand of the elderly woman. After just a few days of this, the patient suddenly opened her eyes and turned and said to the nurse, “You’re so kind.” The next day she talked some more and incredibly two weeks later, the lady was well enough to leave the hospital and go home! Of course, it doesn’t always work like that, but studies are accumulating which show without question that love has healing power.”³

My brothers and sisters let us be instruments of Jesus’ healing power by remembering those people who are sick in our daily prayer, later after pandemic, visit and touch them and show our love, concern, and compassion. Let us say encouraging words and be understanding to those people around us. We don’t know maybe they are experiencing depression, hurt or anxiety. Let us all be instruments of love and healing.

Let this be our prayer: “Lord Jesus Christ, the Divine Healer, heal me and others from our iniquities and infirmities. You have all the power to deliver me from harm, trouble, and bondage. Set me free so that I may serve You wholeheartedly and joyfully, my brothers and sisters with generosity, and give myself completely to You and to Your service. Amen.”

³ www.stories4homilies.co