

## A Multitude of Need

5<sup>th</sup> Week of Ordinary Time – Mark 1: 29-39

This particular story from Mark is what is known as a cure story. Within the wider narrative, Mark has illuminated the various components of Jesus' ministry of salvation through the accounts of Jesus' miracles, cures and calls to follow him. As we journey through the Ordinary Time of the liturgical year, this particular story, the healing of Peter's mother-in-law, follows last week's healing, by Jesus, of the demonic in the synagogue.

Scripture scholars note that Mark wants to impress upon his readers that Jesus' authority is found in both his word and in his touch. Jesus brings to every situation the fullness of the kingdom. Jesus is everything that the demons and the illness are not. Jesus is the fulfillment of God's promise to the Chosen People. When we look closely, we discover that it is not only Simon's mother-in-law who is cured. Jesus is not limited in his ministry. Jesus is answering a multitude of need in this short section from the gospel of Mark.

**“Simon's mother-in-law lay sick with a fever. They immediately told him about her. He approached, grasped her hand, and helped her up. When it was evening, after sunset, they brought to him all who were ill or possessed by demons. The whole town was gathered at the door. He cured many who were sick with various diseases, and he drove out many demons, not permitting them to speak because they knew him.”**

Wherever we look today, the need for God's healing love is still present in the world. The need for Jesus' healing touch and powerful words are everywhere. We as Catholics understand that these needs can be answered in a number of ways.

We are called by baptism to be Christ to others, utilizing our own gifts and talents to help alleviate human suffering. You might be a counselor who helps someone with grief in the aftermath of death. Maybe you are a medical worker who does everything in your power to lessen the debilitating effects of illness. Perhaps you are a police officer, firefighter or EMT who assists in times of trauma. You might be a teacher who spends extra time with the parents of a child with need. The list is endless. Our talents are God-given. They are meant to be shared in Christ's name with the world. We believe that we do not accomplish anything without Christ's authority.

We also understand that the healing authority of Jesus is grounded in our sacramental life. We believe that through the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick, Christ is fully present. When the priest administers this sacrament, it is truly and really Christ's words and touch. Physical cure is possible, but the sacrament focuses mainly of the redemptive nature of suffering, allowing the spiritual healing of the one who is anointed.

On Saturday, February 10<sup>th</sup> at St. Isidore Fr. Jack will be administering the sacrament of the anointing of the sick at the 6:00 p.m. Mass. On Sunday, February 11<sup>th</sup>, Fr. Jack will be anointing those at St. John at the 8:30 a.m. Mass. All who feel a need to be anointed for any need, whether it is physical, emotional, spiritual or psychological, are welcome to celebrate this sacrament. The community is invited to be fully present as the Body of Christ to offer our support and prayer during this important sacramental moment.

In celebrating this sacrament together, we proclaim Jesus as the true authority in our lives, as his words and touch answer a multitude of need.

Blessings!  
Sue Schettler