



Some reflections inspired by online copyrighted commentaries and homilies

June 27, 2021

Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

The woman we encounter in today's gospel wants to be cured by Jesus. She wants him to do what the doctors could not do—make her whole. Although her desire was noble and worthy, she chose a rather unusual way to attain it. Instead of coming up to Jesus and asking for his help, she crept up behind him through the crowd and touched his cloak. She said to herself, "If I but touch his clothes, I will be cured." What a wacky idea. Did this woman think that Jesus was a magical lamp that she simply had to rub to attain what she needed? The way she pursued her healing was curious. God's healing does not come because we touch a statue or a cross or something. The good news is that Jesus does heal her, even though her way of approaching the healing was misguided. To make sure that she knows this, Jesus says to her, "Daughter, your faith has saved you." That is: it was your faith, not your touch, that made you whole.

Now this story of the woman with the hemorrhage is an important story for us, because often in our relationship with Jesus we set conditions that are as ridiculous as this woman was. We imagine that some occurrence, some circumstance, as I always say, "*looking for the spectacular*", is necessary for us to be happy. Like the woman in the Gospel, we say, "If only this would happen, everything will be fine." If only I could get this job, if only this I could win the lottery, if only the problems in my marriage could be resolved, I would be made whole. If I could get into a choice college, if my child stopped abusing drugs, if the test for cancer comes back negative, then all would be as it should be.

Of course, many times in our lives the conditions that we set are reached. We get the job, the College accepts us, or our marriage is saved. When these things happen, we should be thankful and feel blessed. But when we do not attain the things, we imagine as necessary and don't receive the things we want, we must remember the woman in today's gospel. She was healed, not because she did what she thought she had to do, but because God loved her. Likewise, we must remember that God is bigger than the things we think are necessary for our happiness. Even if we are not accepted by the college we desire, even if our child is unable to stop using drugs, even if the tests come back positive, God is still able to lead us through life. God has ways of saving us free of the conditions and negotiations that we feel are necessary for a healing.

The woman of today's gospel touched Jesus' cloak and she was healed—not because she touched the magical cloak, but because God loved her. When we are unable to touch the things that we feel are necessary, when life seems to brush past our grasp, it is important to believe that God's love is still there, and by our Faith, we will be healed.