

ctkAlive! Scripture Study
13th Sunday in Ordinary Time
2021—B Cycle



"Jesus Healing Jairus' Daughter"
by [Paolo Veronese](#) (1546)

Opening Prayer

(edited and abridged for use here)

Healing Prayer

Heavenly Father,
I thank you for loving me.
I thank you for sending your Son
to the world to save and to set me free.
I trust in your power and grace
that sustain and restore me.
Loving Father, touch me now
with your healing hands,
for I believe that your will
is for me to be well
in mind,
body,
and spirit.

by St. [Padre Pio, OFM](#)* (born Francesco Forgione, 1887-1961)

* The Wikipedia article reads like a mystery novel, taking many twists and turns. Padre Pio became a controversial character in the 20th c. Italian Church. Was he a miracle working saint or a great sinner and self-promoter, as many thought. . . ?

Scripture Readings

Book of Wisdom 1: 13-15 and 2:23-24 "God did not make death, nor does he rejoice in the destruction of the living."

Psalms 30: 2, 4-6, 11-13 "Sing praise to the Lord, you his faithful ones."

II Corinthians 8: 7, 9, 13-15 “Though (our Lord Jesus Christ) was rich, for your sake he became poor that, by his poverty, you might become rich.”

Mark 5: 21-43 “One of the synagogue officials named Jairus came forward. . . .”

A Reading from the Book of Wisdom (1: 13-15 and 2:23-24)

“God did not make death, nor does he rejoice in the destruction of the living. Since he has created everything, all creatures of the universe are for our good; there is no deadly poison in them and the netherworld has no dominion over the earth, because justice is immortal.

“Indeed God created (us) to be immortal in the likeness of his own nature, but the envy of the devil brought death to the world. Those who take his side shall experience death.”

Personal Reflection

In the last centuries before Christ, Greek culture penetrated the countries of the Middle East, due mainly to Emperor Alexander the Great. The Book of Wisdom dates from between 80 and 50 BC/BCE. Its author spoke Greek and lived in Egypt. Many Jews lived throughout the Greek-speaking world. The Greeks had a new way of viewing freedom of the individual and nobility of spirit. They promoted scientific research and esteemed physical beauty. Jews immersed in the Greek culture before the birth of Christ had to be open to these new ways of thinking.

The Book of Wisdom marked the first important effort in Judaism to express its faith and wisdom in a form adapted to Greek culture. It offers answers to the crucial questions of evil, pain, and death. It sketches a proof of the existence of God that later inspired St. Paul. The author seeks to expand Jewish thought by showing that God’s mercy extends to all beings *without exception*.

“The envy of the devil brought death to the world, and those who take his side shall experience death.” Theologians argue over the origin of “hell.”

— *Who do I think “created” Hell? Did humans (“Adam” and “Eve”) bring it into being? Does Hell really exist as a place of eternal non-God? What is my nonprofessional, human but Christian conclusion? On what do I base my opinion?*

Note: See the books recommended later in this reflection.

Responsorial Psalm 30 (2, 4-6, 11-13)

Thanksgiving for recovery from sickness.

*I will praise you, Lord,
For you have rescued me.
I extol you, O Yahweh, for you have rescued me;
my enemies will not gloat over me.
Yahweh, you have brought me up from the grave,
you gave me life when I was going to the pit.
I will praise you, Lord,
For you have rescued me.*

Sing to Yahweh, O you his saints,
give thanks and praise to his holy name.
For his anger lasts but a little while,
and his kindness all through life.
Weeping may linger for the night,
but rejoicing comes with the dawn.
*I will praise you, Lord,
For you have rescued me.*

Hear, O Yahweh, and have mercy on me;
O Yahweh, be my protector.”
But now, you have turned my mourning into rejoicing;
you have taken off my sackcloth
and wrapped me in the garments of gladness.
*I will praise you, Lord,
For you have rescued me.*

And so my soul, no longer silent,
now sings praise without ceasing.
O Yahweh my God,
forever will I give you thanks.
*I will praise you, Lord,
For you have rescued me.*

Personal Reflection

This 30th of David’s 35 psalms reveals different perspectives. He appears to suffer from a state of desperation. At the end of the psalm, love prevails. At times (often?), we can identify with that situation. David does not lose hope. He asks the Lord in the very last words, “Save me in your love.” Jesus uttered these last words with his dying breath: “Father, into your hands I commend my spirit” (Luke 23: 46). Thus, he models the way he wants us to pray at the hour of own death. Praying this psalm restores our hope and trust in the Lord.

— *When did I last have the experience of worrying all night about something? What was it about? How did it turn out in the light of day? Did my sleepless worry make things better or worse for me? How?*

— *When did my soul sing with happiness about some blessing that came into my life? What brought me that joy? How did I give thanks to God for that blessing?*

A Reading from St. Paul’s Second Letter to the Corinthians (8: 7, 9, 13-15)

“You excel in everything: in the gifts of faith, speech and knowledge; you feel concern for every cause and, besides, you are first in my heart. Excel, also, in this generous service.

“You know well, the generosity of Christ Jesus, our Lord. Although he was rich, he made himself poor, to make you rich, through his poverty.

“I do not mean that others should be at ease and you burdened. Strive for equality; at present, give from your abundance what they are short of, and, in some way, they too will give from their abundance, what you lack. Then, you will be equal and what Scripture says shall come true: ‘To the one who had much, nothing was in excess; to the one who had little, nothing was lacking.’”

Personal Reflection

In the year 48 AD/CE, draught and famine devastated Judea and Jerusalem. In Acts 11: 27-28, we read, “At that time, some prophets went down from Jerusalem to Antioch; and one of them, named Agabus, inspired by the Holy Spirit, foretold that a great famine would spread over the whole world. Due to the previous year’s poor harvest, this actually happened in the days of the Roman Emperor Claudius.” To help affected Christians, Paul promised to keep the Jerusalem community in mind, during his missions among the pagans (“We should keep in mind the poor among them. I have taken care to do this” Letter to the Galatians 2: 10).

In this reading from Second Corinthians, Paul exhorts the Christians in Corinth and environs to take up a collection they had agreed upon. Paul does not use the word, “collection,” in these chapters. Instead he speaks of the liberality and the greatness of generous giving—the blessed work of grace. He calls it more *a gift for the one who gives* than for the one who receives. Paul takes great care that the collection, involving large amounts of money, should be taken up . . . but only by people who enjoy the confidence of the community.

— *How good am I about remembering to help the poor and good causes with my money? When did I last do this? Did I give from my “extra” funds or from money I needed for my personal needs?*

There’s an expression, “Give until it hurts.” Consider another, perhaps better motivation: “Give until it feels good.”

— *Which criterion do I use when deciding on the amount of my gift to the poor or to my parish?*

Proclamation from the Gospel according to Mark (5: 21-43)

(This shorter version omits Verses 21-24 and 35-43 of Chapter 5, the spontaneous cure of the sick woman who touched Jesus’ clothes, hoping for healing.)

(After calming the storm) “Jesus crossed to the other side of the lake and, while he was still on the shore, a large crowd gathered around him. Jairus, an official of the synagogue, came up and, seeing Jesus, threw himself at his feet; and begged him earnestly, ‘My little daughter is at the point of death. Come and lay your hands on her, so that she may get well and live.’

“Jesus went with him, and many people followed, pressing around him. While Jesus was still speaking, some people arrived from the official’s house to inform him, ‘Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the Master any further?’

“But Jesus ignored what they said, and told the official, ‘Do not fear, just believe.’ And he allowed no one to follow him except Peter, James, and John, the brother of James.

“When they arrived at the house, Jesus saw great turbulence, with people weeping and wailing loudly. Jesus entered, and said to them, ‘Why all this commotion and weeping? The child is not dead, but asleep.’

“They laughed at him. So Jesus sent them outside and went with the child’s father and mother and his companions into the room, where the child lay. Taking her by the hand, he said to her, ‘*Talitha kum!*’ (‘Little girl, get up!’).

“The girl got up at once and began to walk around. (She was twelve years old.) The parents were amazed, greatly amazed! Jesus strictly ordered them not to let anyone know about it; and he told them to give her something to eat.”

Personal Reflection

During Jesus’ lifetime it was customary to hire professional mourners and musicians for a funeral. (The same is true today among some of the world’s cultures.) Today, we prefer ritual rituals, eulogies, slide shows, etc., to ease the sting of a loved one’s death.

In the gospel incident, the father of a dying girl goes to Jesus in a spirit of faith (v. 22). When Jesus arrived at Jairus’s home, he did not get caught up in the mourners’ wailing. Rather, he declares the child alive but asleep (v. 39). The professionals mock him. After all, they knew death when they saw it. Jesus sends the noisy crowd outside and takes with him the girl’s father and mother, who believe in his power.

People died every day during Jesus lifetime. Only rarely (that we know of in the gospels) did he revive of a dead person (e.g., Lazarus).

— *Why did Jesus go out of his way to help this father and mother, total strangers, whose daughter just died or seemed to be dead?*

(Think about this next question in the broadest terms.) Review key moments and decisions you’ve made in your life.

— *When have I been mocked/laughed at for doing something I believed I had to do? Where did I find courage to overcome criticism—even ridicule—to do something I felt called to do? How did that situation end—for me and/or someone else?*

For Inspirational Listening/Viewing/Reading

Video:

Richard Rohr on “[The Universal Christ](#)” (2018)

Rohr talks about the essence of his understanding of salvation. (1 hr., but worth staying with, if you can)

Books:

[The Universal Christ](#) by [Richard Rohr](#), OFM.

[God First Loved Us: The Challenge of Accepting Unconditional Love](#) by [Antony F. Campbell](#), S.J.

These two books by Catholic theologians ask the most mysterious question of all: "What happens next after the moment of death?" Rohr's and Campbell's conclusions may surprise you.

The Week Ahead

Journaling Prompts

— *Based on this weekend's Scripture readings, what does the Risen Christ ask me to do TODAY regarding . . .*

(1) the quality of the love I bring to my personal relationships . . . and

(2) my life as an emissary of Christ, committed to bringing God's love to the people with whom I interact in person and on social media?

Who this week needs to hear from me some expression of love?

Who needs to receive from me a moment of laughter and personal concern?

Why do I hesitate?

Take some time to write about your experience and feelings about events occurring in your life today and what you see happening in the world.

Preview of Next Week's Scriptures

14th Sunday of Ordinary Time

Ezekiel 2: 2-5 "They shall know that a prophet has been among them."

Psalms 123: 1-4 "To you I lift up my life."

Second Corinthians 12: 7-10 "... a thorn in my side was given to me, and angel of Satan, to beat me, to keep me from being too elated."

Mark 6: 1-6 "Is (Jesus) not the carpenter, the son of Mary . . . and they took offense at him."

Closing Prayer

(edited and abridged for use here)

For a Friend or Loved One's Comfort in Suffering

Loving God,

I pray that you will comfort __*(name)*__ in (his/her) suffering . . .

lend skill to the hands of (his/her) healers . . .

and bless the means used for the cure.

Give me such confidence in the power of your grace

That, even when afraid,

(he/she) may put (his/her) whole trust in you;

through our Savior Jesus Christ.

Amen

Source: WomansDay.com

Questions?

Send any questions or comments you might have to algarrotto@comcast.net

Gender usage in writing: We are conscious of gender references to God in the Scripture texts. Often, attempts to rewrite these passages result in awkward sentence structures. We have left the biblical translations as they are but do our best to be inclusive in all other parts of the reflection.

The Sunday readings are from [*Christian Community Bible: Catholic Pastoral Edition*](#)

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(follow this link to my spiritual novel, [*Bishop Myriel: In His Own Words*](#))