



Family Connections

13th Sunday of ordinary Time (Year B)



Mark 5: 21 - 43

When Jesus had crossed in the boat to the other side, a great crowd gathered around him; and he was by the sea. Then one of the synagogue leaders named Jairus came and, when he saw Jesus, fell at his feet and begged him repeatedly, "My little daughter is at the point of death. Come and lay your hands on her, so that she may be made well, and live." So Jesus went with him. And a large crowd followed him.

Some people came from the leader's house to say, "Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the teacher any further?" But overhearing what they said, Jesus said to the leader of the synagogue, "Do not fear, only believe."

Jesus allowed no one to follow him. When they came to the house of the leader of the synagogue, he saw a commotion, people weeping and wailing loudly. When he had entered, he said to them, "Why do you make a commotion and weep? The child is not dead but sleeping." And they laughed at him.

Then Jesus put them all outside, and took the child's father and mother and those who were with him, and went in where the child was. He took her by the hand and said to her, "Talitha cum," which means, "Little girl, get up!" And immediately the girl got up and began to walk about for she was twelve years of age.

At this they were overcome with amazement. He strictly ordered them that no one should know this, and told them to give her something to eat.



Reflection:

Imagine how hard it must have been to hear the news, "Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the teacher any further?" Jairus' last hope was now gone. "Do not fear," Jesus tells Jairus, all is not lost. Sometimes we receive bad news, too, and our remaining hope is taken away. "Do not fear," Jesus tells us, "only believe." It is at times like these we are called to put our trust in Him.



Table Discussion (at mealtime):

The people laugh at Jesus when the child is not dead, but sleeping. “Describe a time when you (or someone you know) were afraid of being laughed at?”

Storytime

People who were laughed at (a bedtime story):

Noah was laughed at when he first began to build the ark. “Noah, what are you up to?” His neighbours would tease. “While we’re building pools, you are building a ship. It hasn’t rained here in two hundred days.”

Abraham was laughed at when he packed up and left. “Where are you going?” His neighbours would laugh. “Are you starting all over at the age of seventy-five?”

Joseph was laughed at when he dared to dream big. “You and your coat of many colours,” his jealous brothers once said, “we’ll sell you into Egypt as a slave. Then let’s see what will become of you.”

Moses was laughed at for wanting to save his people from Pharaoh’s hands. “Who are you to stand up to Pharaoh’s power and all his many chariots and army?”

Joshua and Caleb were laughed at for wanting to take the land. “The people who live there are giants,” the people complained. “And we are like grasshoppers to them. We could never take the land from them; we would surely lose.”

David was laughed at when he faced the mighty Goliath in battle. “You, a boy, hardly old enough to fight, with no armour, no helmet or sword in your hand,” the giant vowed. “I’ll chop you up fine and feed your flesh to the birds.”

Jesus, too, was laughed at and mocked. The soldiers dressed him in fine purple robes and crowned him with thorns, then blindfolded him and hit him repeatedly. “Guess who hit you,” they laughed in his face. They made him the butt end of all their jokes.

God used Noah to save the animals and his family from drowning and Abraham to establish a new people that would tell of God’s goodness. God used Joseph to rescue his entire family from famine and death and Moses to rescue God’s people from the hands of Pharaoh. God used Joshua and Caleb to give his people their own land and David to conquer their enemies with a sling and some stones.

As of Jesus, God saved the best for last. Though he suffered the most and died on the cross, God raised him from death and made Him our Lord.

“Do not be afraid, but only believe,” Jesus said to Jairus. “Do not be afraid, but only believe,” Jesus says to each one of us, too. “Though others may laugh and things may seem grim. I am your saviour, your redeemer, your all. I will be with you, and I will prevail. So, put your trust in me and never lose hope.”



Parenting Corner: Entrusting our Prayers to God

Prayers are a wonderful way for children to entrust their cares and concerns to God. Bedtime is a great time to place our concerns into God's hands. St. John XXIII has been credited with ending each one of his days as Pope with these words of prayer: "God, it is your Church, I am going to bed." With this simple line, he was able to surrender his worries and the problems that he faced each day as head of the Catholic Church and entrust them all into the hands of God. Parents and children could benefit greatly by doing the same.

Bedtime isn't the only good time to help your child debrief. Look for times when your child is carrying a heavy load. By addressing it in conversation and surrendering it to God, God can heal many wounds. The same is true for you also.



Prayer Box / Book:

Another way to promote coming to God with our prayers is to establish a prayer box/book that is placed on a small table in the house. Anyone can write the concerns they would like the rest of the family to pray for (you may even allow visitors to your house add their requests for prayer). These prayers may be added to a short weekly time of family prayer or incorporated into the children's nighttime prayer ritual.



Short Weekly Time of Family Prayer (or Children's Night Time Ritual):

Opening Prayer:

Lord God, just as Jairus came to Jesus to ask him to heal his twelve-year old daughter, so we come to you once more. Please hear the prayers we place before you and look after all of those who need your help. Keep us safe and free from harm of any kind. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Today we offer special prayers for...

(Read the prayers that are contained in the box or book)

"We leave these prayers in your hands, Jesus. Thank you for looking after them."

You may conclude by praying The Lord's Prayer (The "Our Father...").



The Lily of the Mohawks: The Story of St. Kateri Tekakwitha (a bedtime story):

Her name was Tekakwitha, a Mohawk word that means: “She who bumps into things”. From the birth, she was used to being laughed at for her clumsy nature.

Smallpox was introduced into her village when she was four, and both her mother and sister died of it. Tekakwitha survived, but not without scars to her face and partial blindness in one eye. In order to avoid being teased she would often cover her head with a small blanket when she was with others.

Tekakwitha was known for her goodness and her willingness to help whomever she could. At age 11, when a priest visited her village, she was so struck by his stories of Jesus that she developed a great love for the Christian faith. On seeing her interest, her uncle made fun of her. “If you want to be a true Mohawk,” he said. “You cannot believe in that stuff.”

But the more she was ridiculed, the more she grew convinced. She began to volunteer around the little church in the village and help the priests in tending to the sick and those who were injured in the battle with the Mohicans. She felt as if she had found her true calling, to love God above all, and one’s neighbour as oneself.

Her uncle wanted her to get married when she was 17. “He’s a fine man,” he argued. “And he has asked for your hand in marriage.” And, considering, the scars she had suffered to her face, many thought she could not have done much better. But she refused. She had such a great love for Christ by now, that she could not imagine herself loving anyone as much as him.

You can well imagine the ridicule that followed. Her own relatives believed that, if they gave her a hard enough time, she might reconsider her decision. After all, they thought her to be as foolish as she was young. “She doesn’t realize what is good for her,” they said.

But, despite all the ridicule and all the laughter at her expense, Tekakwitha did not change her mind. In fact, some would say that the laughter only made her more determined. And, to her, it became perfectly clear, I must serve the Lord with all my heart, and I must begin by being baptized.

Tekakwitha was finally baptized when she was 19. She decided to take on the Christian name of “Catherine”, shortened to “Kateri” by the Mohawks. By now, it became perfectly clear that she could no longer live with her uncle, for her relatives were completely against what she had done. She, therefore, asked the priests if she could find housing in the new village of Kahnawake, that was run by the Church. In return, she would do her best in helping them reach out to the Mohawk people.

Kateri was so happy when she moved to Kahnawake. After all those years of having people laugh at her and call her names, she finally found a place where she was accepted for who she was. How nice it was for her to do the Christian work that was given to her and to continue to learn more about the faith. In all that she did she radiated the joy of Christ and the love of God to the Mohawks that came to Kahnawake.

Kateri died at the age of 24, happily prepared to meet her Lord in heaven. People who saw her body, immediately after she died, reported that the scars she had suffered on her face miraculously disappeared, and her face glowed like that of a princess ready to be received by her Lord.