

Monday Week 14 of Ordinary Time

Gospel: Mt. 9:18-26

This early 4th Century fresco comes from the catacomb of Sts. Marcellinus and Peter, Rome, and depicts the moment when the woman who had been haemorrhaging for twelve years, was healed, when in faith, she touched the hem of Jesus' garment. The Gospel illustrates how the power of Jesus comes forth and heals. Today, in the sacraments we too are touched by Jesus (c.f. CCC 1115) so appropriately this picture introduces the part of the Catechism which explains the Church's teaching on the sacraments. The Catechism describes the sacraments as "power that come forth from the Body of Christ... actions of the Holy Spirit at work with His Body, the Church... the masterwork of God" (CCC 1116).



Every celebration of the sacraments is a moment when Jesus' power is at work in us. It is truly a wonderful gift that Jesus still allows us to touch Him in the Eucharist and He in turn reaches out to touch us in all the sacraments. As He healed the little girl by word and action, (He spoke and He laid His hands on her) so our celebrations of the sacraments are by word and action. The priest or bishop, in the person of Christ, says the formula of words according to each Sacrament and does some kind of action, e.g. pouring water in Baptism, raising his hand up in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, lifting the bread and wine in the Eucharist etc. The sacraments are our main source of sanctifying grace; they make us holy, and build us up spiritually, drawing us closer to Jesus Christ who leads us to His Father, by the Holy Spirit. That is the goal of our existence.

Yesterday those children from our parish who received Jesus for the first time this year, came together to celebrate again, this time with the parish community. Let us hold them and their families in our prayers that they might grow more and more in love with Jesus and like the woman, reach to Him so that His power may flow into them.