

Dearly Beloved Faithful:

In today's Holy Gospel reading, we heard of the Healing of the Woman with an issue of blood and the raising of the Daughter of Jairus. The two miracles were described in the same story, and although externally they may appear to be different, they really are the same miracle. We know who this woman who had an issue of blood is. The holy fathers tell us that she was St. Veronica, and therefore, she is not a nameless person. As we listen to the scriptures in the liturgy today, and the preaching of them, we need to be actively engaged in hearing and understanding them. It is very easy to just sit down, and, simply "veg out." Although we may have heard this story many times, maybe with hearing it today it may seem as though it is the first time that we hear it, God will teach us something that we may have not picked up previously. This occurs if we are listening and praying. This information we pick up today is so important and there is nothing more important that you can get during the week than what happens during the Divine Liturgy. Learning the Divine through repetition may help save our souls. To serve God, we need to know God so that we may serve God as we need to be like the sheep that our Lord describes in St. John's gospel, "*My sheep follow me because they know my voice*"

The Lord reveals Himself only to the pure. If we know God more, then we'll follow His commandments more. And by following His commandments we will become pure. In this manner the Lord will reveal Himself to us more. He only reveals Himself to those who are capable of understanding what He reveals and only those who will appreciate what He reveals. As humans with weaknesses and preoccupations, it's hard to always have the same level of intensity to keep up with our spiritual obligations. God knows this. That is the reason we celebrate the Resurrection one day a week. We live in the *reality* of the Resurrection every day. But we don't *celebrate* it every day of the week to the degree we do on Sunday, because God knows that it would become too routine if we celebrated it more frequently and we would become complacent.

So there are times appointed when we should be more intense in our spiritual life such as during the fasting periods. We're embarking on the Lenten period before the Nativity of our Lord coming up very soon. All the other Lenten periods are times of increased intensity in the spiritual life, but on a weekly basis, Saturday and Sunday, those are God's days. Those are the days when God is going to teach us something. So you don't have the luxury right now to be sit around and do nothing from a spiritual perspective. We need to be engaged with the life of the Lord's Church and our commitment to Him. This is crucial for our salvation. In prayerful services (the Divine Liturgy) so while our body sits, our spirit should stand up. We need to bend our ear to listen to the word of God. We need to make an effort to see what is it that God wants us to know. However, if we pray to the Lord, God will provide what is lacking, both in what we say and in what we understand. This is an amazing marvelous mystery.

In today's gospel reading, "***There came a man named Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue: and he fell down at Jesus' feet, and besought him that he would come into his house: For he had one only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she lay a dying.***"

He's gone back to the other side and He's walking, He's surrounded by hundreds of people. The people crowd around Him and press up against Him, because after all, He was the focus of excitement at that time. People had heard of His miracles. They had heard of these amazing things. They had heard people say He speaks with authority, not in the manner in which the scribes did. This man is different, and people desired to be in His presence. Those that hated Him and those that loved Him wanted to be in His presence, because there was something different about Him. So there were so many people around and Jairus pushes through this crowd and he prostrates before the Lord. Saint Mark tells us a little bit more. He said, "I pray thee, come and lay thy hands on her that she may be healed and she shall live." Jairus wants the Lord's help and gets what he wishes, but waits as he did not have the firm faith that the centurion Cornelius had who said, "Only speak the word and my servant will be healed". 'I don't even need you to come to my house. In fact, I am not even worthy to come to you personally. I am sending my servant because I am unworthy. But I have the faith that you will heal my servant.' Indeed, the centurion's

servant was healed. And indeed Jairus' daughter will be healed, but after a very long and very difficult time for this man who loves his daughter and is fearful now for her life. This man was in want and desperate and pushed toward Christ. In this case his daughter was dying. *In our case it's our sins that are ever before us.* That's important to know. There's a mystery in this statement. The fathers bring it out. The people were crowded around Him and yet later on He says, "Who touched me?"

His apostles didn't understand what He meant. He was essentially saying "there are all these people around Me, and they're not touching Me. They're not receiving salvation. They're not appreciating who I am. But they're all around Me." There was much waiting necessary on the part of Jairus, because there was such a large crowd and one could not walk quickly through such a crowd. This man who was distraught and filled with worry for his daughter and did not have the faith of Cornelius. He had some faith, indeed, and he had confidence that the Lord would help him and save his daughter, but at the moment he believed his daughter was still alive. Then his daughter was dying and at that very moment a woman came up and spends more time, more precious time, as the clock is ticking and his daughter is dying.

"And a woman having an issue of blood twelve years, which had spent all her living upon physicians, neither could be healed of any, Came behind him, and touched the border of his garment: and immediately her issue of blood stanchèd."

Saint Mark spoke about this exact miracle and he said more. This was an example of how the Gospels were written by men inspired by God, because if you take a look at St. Luke's Gospel and Saint Mark's and St. Matthew's, they describe the same event and give it a slightly different perspective, but it is quite obvious that they are saying exactly the same thing. They are describing the exact same event, and both things they say are true, but one elucidates a point a little different than another. And St. Mark gives a little more information here, very important. He says, "For she said, 'If I may but touch His clothes, I may be whole.'"

She had great faith. There is much to learn from this very simple miracle. This woman is not even mentioned by name in the scriptures, although we know her name. Bleeding in that day made a person unclean. A person could not go into the temple if they were bleeding. So this woman was outside of the community of faith. She couldn't go into the temple. She couldn't worship. She had not been in the temple for twelve long years, and she had been considered unclean for that entire period of time. She had spent all of her money on physicians, and still was incurable. She had a hopeless disease. She must have had great despondency over this disease.

And this disease, this bleeding, is also indicative of our sins. Don't we hemorrhage sins? But we are hemorrhaging. The blood is flowing on the floor. This woman had an issue of blood. And in the same way this woman was healed, we must be healed. She touched Christ. We must reach out and touch Christ!

May the miracles of healing be upon us and may the Lord hear our prayers and have mercy upon us.

*Prayerfully in Christ, I remain
Your faithful supplicant,*

+Fr. Michael

Saints and Feasts Commemorated

Luke the Monk of Taormina

7th Sunday of Luke

Paul the Confessor, Patriarch of Constantinople



Saint Paul was from Thessalonica. He became the secretary of Alexander, Patriarch of Constantinople (see Aug. 30), a deacon, and then the successor of Saint Alexander in about 337. Because of his virtue, his eloquence in teaching, and his zeal for Orthodoxy, the Arians hated and feared him. When the Arian Emperor Constantius, who was in Antioch, learned of Paul's election, he exiled Paul and proclaimed the Arian Eusebius Patriarch. Saint Paul went to Rome, where he found Saint Athanasius the Great also in exile. Provided with letters by Pope Julius, Paul returned to Constantinople, and after the death of Eusebius in 342, ascended again his rightful throne; the Arians meanwhile elected Macedonius, because he rejected the Son's con-substantiality with the Father (and the divinity of the Holy Spirit besides). When Constantius, yet at Antioch, learned of Paul's return, he sent troops to Constantinople to drive Paul out. The Saint returned to Rome, where Saint Athanasius also was again in exile. Constans, Emperor of the West, Constantius' brother, but Orthodox, wrote to Constantius that if Athanasius and Paul were not allowed to return to their sees, he would come with troops to restore them him-self. So Paul again returned to his throne. After the death of Constans, however, Constantius had Paul deposed. Because of the love of the people for Saint Paul, Philip the Prefect, who was sent for him, was compelled to arrest him secretly to avoid a sedition. Paul was banished to Cucusus, on the borders of Cilicia and Armenia; a town through which his most illustrious successor, Saint John Chrysostom would also pass on his way to Comana in his last exile. In Cucusus, about the year 350, as Saint Paul was celebrating the Divine Liturgy in the little house where he was a prisoner, the Arians strangled him with his own omophorion, so much did they fear him even in exile. His holy relics were brought back to Constantinople with honour by the Emperor Theodosius the Great.

FATHER MICHAEL REQUESTS...that we, as a faithful community keep the following individuals in our prayers: Theodore Kermidas (son of John and Cassie), Ted Simon, Maria Lambrinos, Steve Anastos, Angelo Romas, and Suzanne Vaishnani, daughter of Ted Simon. Please notify Fr. Michael if you have anyone else who should be included for special prayers. May they be under the grace and tender watch of our Lord.

There is a sign-up list for those who wish to volunteer to assist in Coffee Hour Fellowship. This list will have all the future Sunday's listed, for this ecclesiastical year, in the Exo-Narthex. Please sign up for as many Sundays as you would like to help make our Coffee Hour Fellowship a success. Coffee is being provided to the entire parish this year for free. Please join us in helping with this worthy cause.

PHILOTOCHOS FUNDRAISING

Holiday Bake sale - Please place your orders online <https://www.GreekLadiesVestal.com>
We will be collecting perishable food items for Chow.

Wisdom of the Fathers

For in a contest there is much labor needed--and after the contest victory falls to some, to others disgrace. Is the palm ever given or the crown granted before the course is finished? ... Therefore no one can receive a reward, unless he has striven lawfully; nor is the victory a glorious one, unless the contest also has been toilsome.

St. Ambrose of Milan

Chapter 15, Three Books on the Duties of the Clergy, 4th century

He puts an end to the woman's fear ... He sets her right, in respect of her thinking to be hid ... He exhibits her faith to all, so as to provoke the rest also to emulation ...

St. John Chrysostom

Homily 31 on Matthew 9, 4th Century

Whether you are an Orthodox Christian, or this is your first visit to an Orthodox Church, we are pleased to have you with us. Although Holy Communion is reserved for baptized and chrismated (confirmed) Orthodox Christians, all are invited to receive the "ANTIDORON" (blessed bread) which is not a sacrament, but is a reminder of the "agape feast" that followed worship in the early Church. After the Divine Liturgy this morning, please join us in the Church Hall for fellowship and refreshments. We hope that you will return often to worship with us.