

Historic Commentary

(Sixth Sunday after Pentecost - Year B)



The Liturgy Letter

Commentary on Mark 5:21-43 from Selected Church Fathers

[Thomas Aquinas' curated commentary on Mark 5](#), from a 13th century document called the [Catena Aurea](#) that contains compiled verse by verse commentary on the Gospels from the Patristics and others.

[Jerome](#): The woman with the hemorrhage had spent all that she had on doctors. Hungering and thirsting, her spirit had died within her. Having lost everything she possessed, because her life was wasting away within her, she cried out to the Lord in anguish. Her touch on the hem of his garment was the cry of a believing heart. In this she is the figure of the assembly of God gathered from all nations.

[Ephrem the Syrian](#): Glory to you, hidden Son of God, because your healing power is proclaimed through the hidden suffering of the afflicted woman. Through this woman whom they could see, the witnesses were enabled to behold the divinity that cannot be seen. Through the Son's own healing power his divinity became known. Through the afflicted woman's being healed her faith was made manifest. She caused him to be proclaimed, and indeed was honored with him. For truth was being proclaimed together with its heralds. If she was a witness to his divinity, he in turn was a witness to her faith.... He saw through to her hidden faith, and gave her a visible healing.

[Jerome](#): Note the separate stages; mark the progress. As long as she was hemorrhaging, she could not come into his presence. She was healed by faith and then came before him. She fell at his feet. Even then she did not yet dare to look up into his face. As long as she had been cured, it was enough for her to cling to his feet. She "told him all the truth." Christ himself is the truth. She was giving praise to the truth. She had been healed by the truth.

[Augustine](#): Few are they who by faith touch him; multitudes are they who throng about him.

[Ambrose](#): And what shall I say about the daughter of the ruler of the synagogue, at whose death the people were mourning and the flute players were playing their music? On the assumption that she was indeed dead, solemn funeral services were already being performed. But her spirit returned immediately at the voice of the Lord. She arose with revived body and partook of food to furnish proof that she was alive.

Augustine: He comes to the house, and finds the customary funeral rites already underway, and he says to them, “Why do you make a tumult and weep? The child is not dead, but sleeping.” He spoke the truth. She was in a certain sense asleep—asleep, that is, in respect of him, by whom she could be awakened. So awakening her, he restored her alive to her parents.

Jerome: For whenever he raised anyone from the dead he ordered that food should be given him to eat, lest the resurrection should be thought a delusion. And this is why Lazarus after his resurrection is described as being at the feast with our Lord.

Theodoret of Cyr: For since eating is appropriate for those living this present life, the Lord necessarily demonstrated this by means of eating and drinking, thus proving the resurrection of the flesh to those who did not think it real. This same course he pursued in the case of Lazarus and of Jairus’ daughter. For when he had raised up the latter he ordered that something should be given her to eat.