

61 Twenty-third Sunday after Pentecost

“Be of good heart, daughter: thy faith hath made thee whole. And the woman was made whole from that hour.” (Mt. 9: 22)

The first miracle narrated in today’s gospel teaches us two powerful lessons: (1) how **a soul sick with sinful habit** could be healed and be raised to the life of sanctifying grace – by the flow of grace through the worthy reception of the Sacraments of Confession and Holy Communion, (2) and how **the world sick with errors and wickedness** could be healed by the flow of God’s grace through the Immaculate heart of Mary.

Let us first compare the conduct of that woman to the conduct of ours at Holy Mass and Holy Communion. Jesus Christ remains with us in the Most Holy Sacrament of the altar, clothed with the garment of the Sacramental species of bread and wine, so that he who receives his sacred body and blood with profound faith and humility, may be freed from the **evil concupiscence**, signified by the **issue of blood** of the woman.

Yes, the woman troubled with an issue of blood for twelve years signifies those who are troubled by the habit of sin in their flesh.

Let us see the miserable condition of this poor woman:

- (1) She suffered from a decease so very ugly and dreadful, that among the Jews it was a legal un-cleanness! (of shamefulness and unworthiness to be promoted to major orders)
- (2) This decease had lasted twelve long years! (hence habitual)
- (3) She has suffered many things from many physicians (signifying our shifting many confessors and different spiritual directors)
- (4) The effect of all the remedies was not a recovery of health, but an aggravation of her dis-order. (so, the eradication of evil habit has become almost impossible)

All these are narrated in this miracle, to manifest the goodness and power of Jesus Christ who showed that he alone can and **will come to the recue** of the afflicted, when created means have been tried in vain.

Now let us follow her conduct of approaching Our Lord:

She approached Jesus **from behind and secretly** – ashamed to make known her disease and be repelled by the people as one who had defiled the whole multitude. She approached him with **faith and confidence**. She said: “If I shall touch only his garments, I shall be healed.”

The “**hem of the garment**” was a blue fringe which God had ordered to be worn by the Jews: “Thou shalt make strings in the hem at the four corners of thy cloak . . .” (Deut. 22: 12) that the people of God might be singled out from all other peoples. “The Lord also said to Moses: speak to the children of Israel, and thou shalt tell them to make to themselves fringes in the corners of their garments putting in them ribands of blue: that when they shall see them, they may remember all the commandments of the Lord, and not follow their own thoughts and eyes going astray after diverse things, but rather being mindful of the precepts of the Lord, may do (observe) them and be holy to their God.” (Num. 15: 38 – 40) It was, then, a symbol of the wearer’s holiness of life.

This poor woman had so much belief in the power and holiness of Jesus, that she hoped to obtain her cure not only by exercise of Christ’s power, but also **through a communication of his sanctity in her**. The “hem of the garment” – the blue fringe is the “link” through which God’s grace passes from Jesus Christ to the soul. “Somebody has touched me,” Jesus said, “for I know that virtue is gone out from me.” Therefore, **her touching the “hem of the garment”** is not merely an external act of piety, but **her acceptableness before God** in the interior of her soul. Do we really experience this touch of grace and holiness when we approach the Sacraments of confession and Holy Communion? For a vast majority of men, it does not seem to be a real touch of grace, but, God forbid, is an abuse of Grace!

Listen to what Pope Pius XII, who went to the Sacrament of Confession every day, said in his Encyclical 'Mystici Corporis Christi' says:

"For a constant and speedy advancement in the path of virtue, we highly recommend the pious practice of frequent confession, introduced by the church under the guidance of the Holy Ghost; for by this means we grow in a true knowledge of ourselves and in Christian humility, bad habits are uprooted, spiritual negligence and apathy are prevented, the conscience is purified and the will strengthened, salutary spiritual direction is obtained, and grace is increased by the efficacy of the sacrament itself."

When we accept the call of God, we are expected to change our ways. To overcome sin means to repent of it. The Greek word for repentance is metanoia,

which literally means, to change. As we repent of our sins, we need to change our old evil ways and start living a righteous life.

We already know why we need to overcome sin, but how exactly can we do that?

10 Practical Points to Powerfully Overcome Sin

Point no. 1: Identify the sin

We need to specify the sin that we want to overcome. We must identify the ROOT CAUSE and start from there. It is the very first thing we must do.

Point no. 2: Avoid the cause of sin

The best way to overcome sin is to withdraw from temptation. The more you get closer to temptation, the stronger is its pull. The Bible tells us, “Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall” (I Corinthians 10:12).

If you think that standing in front of the magazine stand tempts you to buy pornographic materials, then by all means, avoid that place. If you think that your friends cause you to gossip, then by all means avoid them. When confronted with sin, we must run the opposite way – not toward it! (Amos 5:14-15; II Timothy 2:22; I Thessalonians 5:22).

Point no. 3: Have the will to overcome the sin

Identifying the sin is easy but having the willingness and willpower to overcome sin is more difficult.

Changing our sinful habits does not come naturally. It is a conscious effort that we all need to do. Therefore, if you want to be successful in overcoming sin, then you must make a commitment to do so.

Point no. 4: Remember the deadly consequences of sin

One of the best ways to develop the willingness to overcome sin is to know its NEGATIVE effects.

Think about it: sin has its short-term, long-term, and eternal consequences. It is better to endure for a moment and be deprived of the pleasures of sin than to suffer its deadly consequences in the future.

Point no. 5: Set your mind on the rewards of overcoming sin

If we endure and overcome sin, God will grant us eternal life, membership to His family, rulership in His Kingdom, and joy that never ends!

Keeping God's reward in mind will help us to be motivated and inspired to persevere in our quest to overcome sin.

Point no. 6: Humility is needed to overcome sin

Proud people can't sincerely say "sorry." They are the ones who don't see the need to identify their sins, overcome it, and ask for forgiveness.

Humility enables us to have a teachable attitude. We need to recognize our GREAT dependence on God and the realization that we are nothing unless God grants us repentance

Point no. 7: Replace sinful habits with righteous habits

You don't eliminate habits; you only replace it. We must replace it with righteous habits. It is the most effective way to overcome sin.

Talked to your friends and made a commitment not just to stop playing computer games but also replace it with **a good habit**. That good habit can be playing basketball. So instead of playing computer games during your free time, agree to play basketball. This is just one of the many examples of replacing sinful habits with righteous habits. Be creative and learn drawing and painting, playing musical instruments etc.

Point no. 8: Seek godly counsel

We can always obtain the help of our confessors. God has given them wisdom and they can certainly give you sound advice on how to overcome sin. Since they know you, they can give you a more specific and personalized step-by-step solution to your problem.

Point no. 9: Ask God's help

WE NEED GOD'S HELP. Through prayer and fasting, we can become more spiritually strong in conquering sin.

Point no. 10: Never give up

There are sins that we can quickly overcome, while others can be more difficult. The important thing is that we don't give up. The greatest tragedy that may happen is when we stop overcoming and we just let sin consume and destroy us.

It is not about how many times we fall, but how many times we get up. So, persevere and continue fighting.

God wants to establish in the world devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

When, by original sin, “the link” of God’s friendship with man –was broken, God promised the “Immaculate woman” – the Most Holy Mary - the “blue fringe” - as the one who would crush the head of Satan and set right the broken link.

Our Lady appearing at Lourdes with the blue cincture saying: “I am the Immaculate Conception, said at Fatima: “To save the world, God wants to establish in the world devotion to my Immaculate heart.”

As God ordered the Jews to wear the blue fringe to symbolize their holiness of life, **now** God wants to establish in the world devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Yes, God orders the Pope and all the Bishops to consecrate Russia to the Immaculate Heart, so that the dreadful decease of errors and sins of atheistic communism may be miraculously cured – by the flow of grace through the Immaculate Heart which is the hem of God’s garment now! – the blue fringe to be worn by the children of God at the end of times!

Hence the importance of living, on our part, the “total Consecration” to the Immaculate Heart; and, on the part of the Pope and the Bishops, the “collegial consecration,” of Russia, through the powerful means of practicing and spreading of the devotion of reparation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary – as demanded by Our Lady of Fatima.

The second miracle becomes our Catechism on this Sunday

Lord, my daughter is now dead: but come, lay thy hand upon her, and she shall live.” (Mat. 9: 18)

Our Lord, who raised his own body from the tomb, will also raise the bodies of all the just from the corruption of the grave, and will confer upon them the same **glorious qualities** which shone forth in his own risen and glorified body. The same divine power which raised from the dead the daughter of Jairus, will in God’s good time reform the body of our lowness and make it like to the body of his glory.

I The qualities of the risen bodies

1-The resurrection body will be **our own body.**

(a) **First of all it is evident from the very notion of resurrection**, which means not a creation of another body, but a restoration of the same body.

(b) **This is evident from the scripture**: St Paul says: “the dead shall rise again in corruptible: and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption; and this mortal must put on immortality.” (1Cor. 15: 53) Job says: “And I shall be clothed again with my skin, and in my flesh, I shall see my God. Whom I myself shall see, and my eyes shall behold, **and not another**: this my hope is laid up in my bosom.” (Job. 19: 26, 27)

(c) **It is evident from the purpose of the resurrection**, which is, that man may receive his complete reward or just punishment by association with the same body he had in his earthly life.

2The resurrection body will be our own body, but complete and immortal

St. Paul says: “We shall all indeed rise again: but we shall not all be changed. And the dead shall rise again incorruptible, And this mortal must put on immortality” (1Cor. 15: 51, 52, 53) And St. John says in the book of Apocalypse: “And in those days men shall seek death, and shall not find it: and they shall desire to die, and death shall fly from them.” (Apoc. 9: 6)

II The glorified bodies of the saints:

(1) **The bodies of the saints will be endowed with four transcendent qualities**, as we learn from Scripture and fathers.

(a) They will be **impassible**, or incapable of suffering. “So also is the resurrection of the dead, it is sown in corruption, it shall rise in incorruption.” (1Cor. 15: 42)

(b) They will be **subtle**, or capable of penetrating other solid bodies, as light and heat pass through opaque substances, and as Our Lord entered the upper room. The door being closed (Jn. 20:19). St. Paul explains this as: The body “is sown a natural body, it shall rise a spiritual body.” (1Cor. 15: 44)

(c) They will possess **agility**, or the power of rapid motion, which will enable them to pass from place to place with the swiftness of thought. The body “is sown on weakness, it shall rise in power” (1Cor. 15: 43)

(d) They will be endowed with **brightness**, or external splendor, like that of Moses in Sinai and of Our Lord on Thabor. The body “is sown in dishonour, it shall rise in glory” (1Cor. 15: 43)

(2) The bodies of the damned will be, on the contrary, will be hideous and horrible in appearance, and will be confined to suffer unending torments; “Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake; some unto life everlasting, and others unto reproach, to see it always” (Dan. 12: 2)

Lesson: We should be grateful for the knowledge of these truths, revealed to us by God, which were concealed from many of the wisest men of antiquity. (See Acts. 17: 32)

The doctrine of the future resurrection affords us greatest consolation when we mourn the loss of our beloved departed.