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Daily Reflections



THE CALL TO LOVE BEYOND RULES

By Lucy Dominguez

Today's Gospel

*Jesus entered the synagogue.
There was a man there who had a withered hand.
They watched Jesus closely
to see if he would cure him on the Sabbath
so that they might accuse him.
He said to the man with the withered hand,
"Come up here before us."
Then he said to the Pharisees,
"Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath rather than to do evil,
to save life rather than to destroy it?"
But they remained silent.
Looking around at them with anger
and grieved at their hardness of heart,
Jesus said to the man, "Stretch out your hand."
He stretched it out and his hand was restored.
The Pharisees went out and immediately took counsel*

with the Herodians against him to put him to death.

MARK 3:1-6

Reflection

This Gospel story reminds us of what truly matters to Jesus: compassion, and love over rules and appearances. In the synagogue, Jesus sees a man with a withered hand who needs healing. The Pharisees, however, are watching closely, not to help but to accuse Jesus if He cures the man on the Sabbath.

Jesus asks a simple question: "Is it right to do good on the Sabbath or to do harm, to save life or to destroy it?" The Pharisees stay silent, showing their hearts are more focused on rules than love. This grieves Jesus but doesn't stop Him from healing the man. By doing so, He teaches us that love and mercy are always the right choices, no matter the day or the rules.

This Gospel reminded me of an incident I recently witnessed. A mentally unwell man left the hospital next door and wandered onto the St. Joseph Center campus. He seemed lost and distressed. Someone called for help, and a Sister of St. Joseph of Orange responded. Instead of turning him away or ignoring him, she approached him, sat with him, and listened. Her calm and compassionate presence brought him peace. Later, after the man recovered, he sent her flowers and visited her, expressing his gratitude for her kindness.

Like Jesus, the Sister saw beyond appearances and rules. She met the man where he was, offering him dignity, care, and love. Her actions mirrored what Jesus does in today's Gospel: choosing mercy and healing over judgment and fear. Jesus calls us to stretch out our hands to receive healing and be instruments of His compassion for others. May we have open hearts like the Sister, ready to sit, listen, and offer love wherever needed.



Man Holding a Woman's Hands for Comfort

Photo by pcess609

For Pondering

- How do I respond when I see someone in need? Am I quick to judge, or do I take the time to offer compassion and care, as Jesus and the Sister of St. Joseph did?
- What rules, habits, or fears might prevent me from fully embracing opportunities to show love and mercy to others?
- In what areas of my life is Jesus asking me to "stretch out my hand"—to trust Him, receive His healing, and share His compassion with others?

For Prayer

Peace-Bringer, create in me a heart filled with the kind of love that reflects your own. Open my mind to those I want to reject. Open my heart to those I prefer to avoid. Open my eyes to see beyond the surface of individuals and

recognize your presence in each one. May my thoughts, words, and deeds be devoid of violence in any form. Soften whatever hardens my heart to bring your compassion wherever I go. Remind me often that I, too, am in need of this love and worthy to receive it.

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