



Daily Reflections

JOURNEYING THROUGH CHALLENGING TIMES

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JESUS' PASSION FOR WHOLENESS

By Sister Jeanne Fallon, CSJ

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

When Jesus stepped into the synagogue at Capernaum, he noticed a man with a withered hand, and he knew this infirmity kept him from working for his

livelihood. As Jesus gazed on the man in the shadows, he realized that he was also being watched to see if he would heal the man – it was the sabbath.

In the first chapter of Mark, we saw the powerful preaching and healing of Jesus in Galilee: his miraculous powers dazzled the people. It wasn't long before his mission was thwarted when a healed leper misunderstood Jesus' directions to go quietly to the priest so he could be readmitted into the community. Instead, the man broadcasted the healing everywhere and this kept Jesus from entering new areas openly.

In Mark 2, there are several events where Jesus was scrutinized for his actions by the scribes and Pharisees: Jesus forgave a paralytic's sins; he began to gather his disciples, including Levi, a tax collector; and started to associate with other "sinners" by eating with them. Jesus and his disciples were also confronted because they were not following the Jewish practice of fasting.

In Mark 3, when Jesus entered the synagogue on the sabbath, it was not surprising that Jesus knew he was being watched to see if he would heal the man's withered hand. The law held that if a person was in severe danger of death, he/she could be healed on the sabbath...but surely not a man with a withered hand. Jesus was angry about this law that would forbid healing this man's withered hand, which would bring him to wholeness and allow him to return to the community, doing his fair share of work with his family. After this merciful healing, Jesus' opponents began to plot a way to get rid of him.



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For Prayer

COMPASSION
Loving God,
You Who are full of compassion,
teach me to be like You.
Teach me to be kind and generous and loving,
just as You are kind and generous and loving
to all your creations.
Please
help me develop true sensitivity
and genuine compassion
toward everything in Creation.

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