**Homily** **for the Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time**

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       We all have seen ‘before’ and ‘after’ pictures used to sell diet foods, exercise equipment, and plastic surgery. We all know people in such bad shape that they can make a living as a professional ‘Mr. Before.’

        Today’s readings give us ‘before’ and ‘after’ pictures in three scenes. Actually, it is ‘before,’ ‘after,’ and then ‘after that.’

        The first reading from the Book of Wisdom describes the world as it came fresh from the hand of the Creator God. It says, “God did not make death, He fashioned all things that they might have being, and the creatures of the world are wholesome. God formed man to be imperishable.” It shows us creation filled with the life of God. It is the natural world in all its beauty.

        Then, something snapped. “But, by the envy of the devil, death entered the world,” says the Book of the Wisdom. This refers to that split from God that ruptured creation in the original sin.

        It is as though God had created a magnificent and splendid glass window, like the stained glass windows in many churches. Everything fits together, and then suddenly it was shattered.

        That is scene two, the ‘after’ scene, which is the human world we know. We can pick up each of the pieces of glass and see a little of the beauty of the original creation still there.
But, it is broken off from its center, the pieces no longer easily fit together. The inner harmony, the coherence, the link to God that held everything together were lost by original sin.

        Jesus came to put the broken pieces together into a new creation. We see that in scene three, the ‘after that scene’ in the Gospel today. Jesus restores a little girl to her family and heals a woman afflicted with hemorrhages for twelve years. By that healing, the Lord not only cures her illness, but restores her to her community.

        Throughout the Gospel, we see Jesus through His teaching, His miracles, and now through His Church and the Holy Spirit putting together the broken pieces.

        Jesus can help us and heal us to put the broken pieces together, in our lives and then in our world. But, first, like the woman in the Gospel, we have to reach out to Him, go to Him, and come to Him.

        So often, we looked to mend our lives in externals, and move to a new neighborhood, get a new job, buy new clothes, get a new therapist, when we really need healing and mending on the inside. Jesus gives us that deeper healing, because He heals from the inside out. He is a wonderful and wise physician, always on call.
        We can still see pieces of that first creation in our lives in the desire for justice, the yearning for peace, the search for perfect love or faithful friendship, but we never quite find it in this world.  All of these are signs of that first creation that can be repaired in Christ’s new creation. Those pieces of the first creation built into us are still there, but disordered by sin.

        Jesus said to us today, “Do not be afraid; just have faith.” In the Gospel, we heard how a woman was healed of twelve years of hemorrhages, simply by touching the clothes of Jesus.

        She had suffered for twelve years before turning to Jesus. She had endured much under many physicians and obviously drained her of all her financial resources. Nothing in the physical world could heal her. Jesus was her last hope, her only hope. She believed so. Finally, her faith took a miracle. Her faith made her well. So, Jesus said to her, “Daughter, your faith has saved you.”

        And, we heard another miracle story. Reaching out to the synagogue official who had faith in Him, Jesus raised his twelve year old daughter. People ridiculed Jesus, but Jesus said to her father, “Do not be afraid; just have faith.” A child arose immediately from death and walked around. Jesus gave life to the little girl that had crossed over to death.

        Jesus can bring healing into our life. That is why the Church remembers and proclaims His miracles to us today.

        Jesus can give us that peace St. Augustine once described magnificently and so truthfully as the ‘tranquility of order.’ Peace is the tranquility of order for a nation and for an individual soul. Peace is the tranquility of order, everything in its proper place, doing what it was intended to do, the broken pieces put back together.

        Every Sacrament and every Mass is a reminder that Christ can put all the broken pieces back together again. In Him, we can know ‘the tranquility of order.’

        Jesus said to us today, “Do not be afraid; just have faith. Your faith has saved you. Go in peace.”