

FAITH ON EARTH BEGINS THE PROCESS OF ETERNAL LIFE

Jesus came into the world to launch an attack on death and to bring new life to the faithful. He works two signs of healing in the Gospel today (Mk 5:21-43), in order to tell us that neither suffering nor death have the last word. Before He awakened the 12 year old girl from the slumber of death, observe how her parents faithfully clung to His Words, and followed Him into the room. After she got up, Jesus asked to give her something to eat. This is a metaphor for the food of immortality, which is the Eucharist. In the Diary of St. Faustina of Divine Mercy (para. 1811), Jesus says: *But I want to tell you that eternal life must begin already here on earth through Holy Communion. Each Holy Communion makes you more capable of communing with God throughout eternity.* Jesus has entered into an Eternal Covenant (Communion) with us now. He promises to raise the faithful from the dead. The First Reading (Wisdom 1:13-15, 2:23-24), informs us clearly that it *was 'the devil's envy that brought death into the world'*. Those who choose to cling to the ways of the devil here on earth are making the choice of clinging to eternal death in the next world of Hades/Hell. We must pray for their conversion. We must never forget that death is the consequence of sin and to make every effort not to sin.

JESUS BROUGHT CHANGE

The Good News informs us, that if we repent for our sins, then healing and heaven await us. Jesus healed the woman who went to Him, symbolising what He does to our souls in the sacrament of confession. Because she had blood loss for over 12 years, then according to the mind-set of that time, she was deemed to be impure and was isolated from the community. We too are sinfully impure and isolated from God when we sin, but when we go to Him in confession, like the woman, He heals us too, through His divine mercy. Jesus praised her faith and called her 'daughter'. She was now part of the heavenly family. The sick woman had spent lots of money on various ineffective treatments which only made her condition worse. This represents those who seek peace and healing in all the wrong places such as other 'religions'. When news arrives that the child was dead, the suggestion was that Jesus was not needed anymore. However, the whole purpose of His coming into the world is that He is needed, in order to turn death into a doorway that leads to a new life. The figure 12 has huge significance, in that, it symbolises change with a new beginning. Jesus appointed the 12 disciples which marked the beginning of the New Church with the New Eternal Covenant. Jesus was 12 years old when found in the temple and told Mary and Joseph that He must now begin doing His Father's work. Some Saints tell us that 12 years after Jesus' death, Mary was assumed into Heaven to begin her role as Queen of Heaven and Earth. Young adults at 12 years old make their Confirmation, and anointed as new spiritual soldiers of Christ to fight sin. The sick woman was 12 years suffering and Jairus' daughter was 12 years old and both given new life. Let us all fulfil our Confirmation promise to God and continue to fight sin and bear witness to our faith in order to qualify for Eternal Life someday. God bless, Fr. Brendan.