

## Twenty-third Sunday after Pentecost

### *The Mercy of Christ*

*"If I shall touch only His garment, I shall be healed"* (Matt., 9:21)

Today's Gospel describes two striking miracles wrought by Our Divine Lord—the cure of a woman who for ten years had suffered from an issue of blood and the raising to life of a ruler's daughter. In both miracles the divine power of Jesus Christ was clearly manifested. But even more evident was His tender mercy. Both cases were such as to arouse the deep sympathy of Our Divine Saviour because of the pathetic condition of those who sought His help—the poor woman who had so long suffered from a distressing ailment without any natural hope of relief and the grief-stricken father who had just seen his little daughter snatched from him by death.

The mercy of Our Divine Saviour is just as great today as it was when He lived on earth, and He is just as willing to aid the suffering and the sorrowing today as He was nineteen centuries ago. But if we wish to profit by His mercy we must approach Him in the same spirit as the poor woman and the afflicted father—with a deep confidence that He can help us and that He will do so if we pray to Him with humility and perseverance.

Neither can we say that we do not possess the same advantage that was granted to the people of Palestine of old, to have Christ personally in their midst. He is with us just as truly as He was with the poor and the suffering who gazed on His gentle face when He walked on earth. For our holy faith assures us that Our Lord is truly present on our altars in the Blessed Sacrament. There He dwells, night and day, to help us in our needs, to give us light and consolation in afflictions, to strengthen us in temptation, and even to relieve our temporal burdens when this will be for our spiritual benefit.

Practical Catholics come to Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament with the same spirit of faith that was manifested by the sick woman when she said, "If I shall touch only his garment, I shall be healed." We can do more than touch the garment of Christ. We can kneel before Him with the assurance of faith that we are conversing intimately with Him as with a beloved friend who is anxious to do us good. He may not grant us the particular favour we ask, especially if it is something temporal or material, because it may not be for our spiritual welfare. But He will always hear our prayers and grant us some favour that will be conducive to our spiritual welfare and to our eternal salvation.

### **Practical Application**

Almost all those in the church today can if they wish, make a visit to the Blessed Sacrament daily, or at least several times in the course of each week. If you have a practical faith in the doctrine of Our Lord's real presence in the Church, you will take advantage of this opportunity to visit Him frequently and to unburden to Him the needs of your soul.