

COURAGE TO SEEK THE TRUTH IN AUSTRALIA
THIRTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME – 27 JUNE 2021

LIGHTING A CANDLE

We begin our reflection by lighting a candle for Greater Sydney, Blue Mountains, Wollongong and Central Coast during the two-week COVID-19 Lockdown which began at 6pm Saturday evening.

[pause and pray]

ST JOHN FISHER COLLEGE (SJFC)

Congratulations to St John Fisher College who celebrated their Feast Day last week. Congratulations on your 40th anniversary this year.

During the Prayers of the Faithful at Mass for the Feast Day and Anniversary, they prayed for

- creation,
- the SJFC community,
- those suffering in the global pandemic,
- respecting the rights of all people and sharing of gifts
- Suzanne who is retiring as College Secretary.

Another of their prayers asked God

“Lord God, may we be inspired by the example of St John Fisher and our Catholic faith tradition, to live, to love and to learn, with respect for truth, the courage to seek justice, the gift of peace and the grace to forgive.”

SAINT EDITH STEIN 1891-1942



The prayer reminded me of a Jewish woman, Edith Stein, who was one of millions of Jewish people killed by the Nazis in the horrendous death camps.

Edith was a brilliant academic and philosopher who did her doctoral thesis on Empathy.

She dedicated her life to the search for truth.

When she became a Carmelite Sister, she chose the name *Sr Teresa Benedicta of the Cross*.

Her courage inspired others, to love and learn, and to seek justice.

God graced her to forgive and to share the gift of peace with others.

TO RESPECT & SEARCH FOR TRUTH

To respect and search for truth is so important in the Christian life. In the Gospel today let us reflect on two people in their searching and in their interaction with Jesus.

GOSPEL OF MARK 5:21-43

Today's Gospel contains two healing episodes

- The little daughter of Jairus, one of the synagogue leaders
- A woman who had been suffering from a haemorrhage for twelve years.

It is called a sandwich passage.

The account of the daughter of Jairus was at the beginning and end of the passage. And in the middle of the passage was the account of the woman who was suffering.

Jairus showed courage, approaching Jesus for a healing for his daughter. Fear did not stop him. Concern about what others think, did not stop him.

He told the truth.

“Then one of the leaders of the synagogue named Jairus came and, when he saw him, fell at his feet and begged him repeatedly, ‘My little daughter is at the point of death. Come and lay your hands on her, so that she may be made well, and live.’ So he went with him. And a large crowd followed him and pressed in on him.”

On the journey, Jairus was told that

‘Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the teacher any further?’

Jesus strengthened his courage and hope by saying to him:

‘Do not fear, only believe.’

They continued to the house where, with courage, Jesus said to those weeping:

‘Why do you make a commotion and weep? The child is not dead but sleeping.’

And they laughed at him.

Yet with courage the father and mother and the named disciples accompanied Jesus

*“and went in where the child was. He took her by the hand and said to her, ‘**Talitha cum**’, which means, ‘Little girl, get up!’ And immediately the girl got up and began to walk about (she was twelve years of age). At this they were overcome with amazement. He strictly ordered them that no one should know this, and told them to give her something to eat.”*



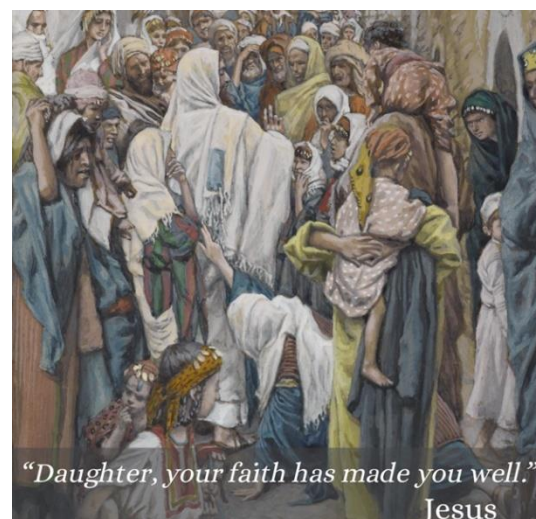
Another with **courage** is the suffering woman in today's passage. There was a large crowd, pressing around Jesus. Even if she could not get the attention of Jesus because of the crowd, she made her way through the crowd, and reached out and touched his clothing. She said to herself - *'If I but touch his clothes, I will be made well.'* And the Gospel tells us:

"Immediately her haemorrhage stopped; and she felt in her body that she was healed of her disease."

Jesus, aware that power had gone forth from him, looked all round to see who had done it. But the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came in fear and trembling and courage, fell down before him, and again **with courage, told him the whole truth.**

Jesus spoke to her,

'Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease.'



In Australia there are many important issues to consider in searching for the truth.

AUSTRALIA

One such issue is recognising our national and local histories - In celebrating the good and just, and admitting our past crimes, injustices and racism.

We ask God to inspire us to face the challenges with courage, and not surrender to the dishonest covering up of crime, injustices and racism.

One such issue is called truth-telling.

One such part of truth-telling is to listen to and acknowledge the crimes against First Nations Peoples in Australia.

The [Australian National Curriculum](#) is currently being reviewed.

The closing date for [consultation](#) is July 9th.

The [Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority \(ACARA\)](#), is responsible for its development.

We ask God to help us as a nation to acknowledge such history in the national curriculum.

We ask God to increase our courage to seek the truth.

Another issue is the response to **migrants, refugees and asylum seekers throughout our history** –

In celebrating the welcoming outreach and generosity at special moments,

and admitting which policies were formed by racist attitudes.
We ask God to inspire us to face the challenges with courage,
and not surrender to the dishonest covering up of systemic racism and bigotry.

We ask God to inspire us through the witness of Jairus and the suffering woman in the Gospel
of Mark.

Both showed courage to seek out the truth and find healing through Jesus.

May we witness to the courage within us to seek the truth and find healing as a nation.

May the Holy Spirit show us the way in truth-telling, in honesty and justice,
and in ways of seeking reconciliation and healing.

Let us pray.

Fr Gerry

readings: <https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/062721.cfm>

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