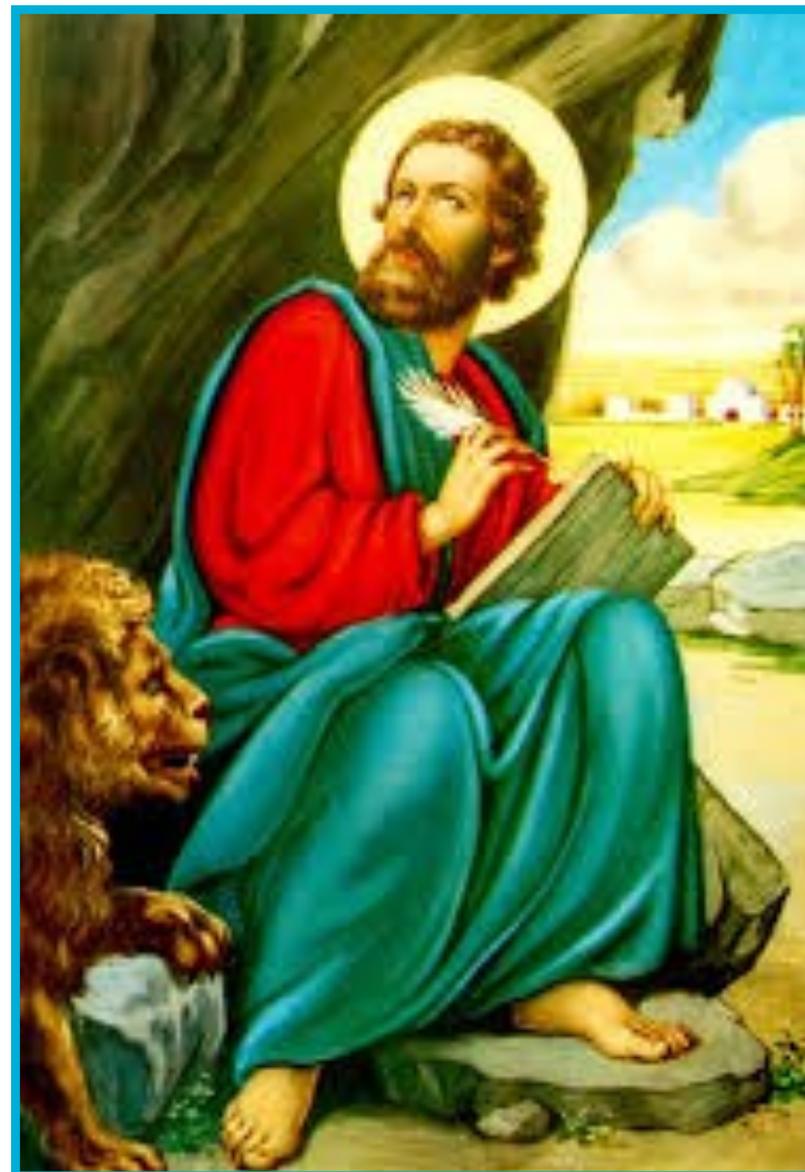




THE GOSPEL OF MARK

CHAPTER 5: 1-43



For the Catholic Church, God's Revelation is found in Sacred Tradition, understood as God's Revealed Word handed down by the Living Teaching Authority established by Christ in the Church. That includes both Written Tradition (Scripture) and Unwritten Tradition received from Christ and handed down Orally by the Apostles and their Successors. The Church founded by Christ on Peter, and only that Church, has been Empowered by Christ to 'Interpret' His Teaching Authoritatively in His Name.

Scripture is *Inspired*; *Inspiration* really means that God Himself is the Chief Author of the Scriptures. He uses a Human Agent, in so marvelous a way that the Human writes what the Holy Spirit wants him to write, does so without Error, yet the Human Writer is Free, and keeps his own Style of Language. It is only because God is *Transcendent* that He can do this - insure Freedom from Error, while leaving the Human Free. To say He is Transcendent means that He is above and beyond all our Human Classifications and Categories.

Mark wrote down Peter's account of the 'good news'. Peter was one of the first twelve of Jesus' disciples, and the first to publicly recognize Him as the Messiah. Peter, through Mark, shows us that Jesus fulfills all the criteria of the Servant-Messiah our Ransom, who was prophesied by Isaiah some 750 years earlier (Isaiah 42:1-9; 49:5-7; 52:13-53:12). Jesus is portrayed as a slave, caring for people and serving God (Mark 1:32-35). There are therefore no details of His birth, only of the beginning of His service (Mark 1:1,9).

Considered one of the most important Catholic theologians and Bible commentators, Cornelius à Lapide's, S.J. writings on the Bible, created a Scripture Commentary so complete and scholarly that it was practically the universal commentary in use by Catholics for over 400 years. Fr. Lapide's most excellent commentaries have been widely known for successfully combining piety and practicality. Written during the time of the Counter Reformation, it includes plenty of apologetics. His vast knowledge is only equaled by his piety and holiness.

Mark 5: 1-43

Douay Rheims Version

*Christ casts out a legion of devils: he heals the issue of blood,
and raises the daughter of Jairus to life.*

1. And they came over the strait of the sea into the country of the Gerasens.
2. And as he went out of the ship, immediately there met him out of the monuments a man with an unclean spirit,
3. Who had his dwelling in the tombs, and no man now could bind him, not even with chains.
4. For having been often bound with fetters and chains, he had burst the chains, and broken the fetters in pieces, and no one could tame him.

Ver. 39. *The damsel is not dead, but sleepeth.* For although she is really dead, yet she shall be forthwith awakened by Me from death as from sleep. Or, as the Scholiast in S. Jerome says, "To you she is dead, to Me she sleepeth."

Talitha cumi. In Hebrew a boy is called *ieled*, for which the Syrians and Chaldeans say *tali*, from whence comes the feminine *talitha*, that is, *girl*. *Cumi* means *arise*, that she being dead should arise from the bed. Moreover, that Mark might give greater emphasis, and express the sense of one who called and commanded, he added, *I say unto thee*, as S. Jerome says.

Ver. 42. *And immediately the damsel rose up and walked*, that she might show she was alive. *Mystically*, as Bede says, "The soul, when raised from sin, ought not only to arise from the filth of its wickedness, but should advance in good works."

Ver. 43. *And commanded that something should be given her to eat*, that He might show that she not only had arisen, but was in good health and hungry. For boys and girls are wont, when they awake out of sleep, if they are well and strong, to ask for food. And death was to her in the place of sleep, as Christ says in the 39th verse.

were so with a garment, how much more with the Eucharist? Hence S. Gorgonia was healed of a severe disease by touching the Eucharist. (See Nazianzen, *Orat.* 11.) So, too, was S. Catherine of Sienna, and many others. (See Salmeron, *tom.* 6, *tract.* 15.)

Tropologically: The issue of blood, says Bede, is fleshly delight, as gluttony, luxury. The most pure flesh of Christ heals these when piously received in the Eucharist.

Ver. 30. *And Jesus . . . had gone out of Him*, and had healed her; not as if any quality had gone out from Christ's hem, or as if this virtue had gone from place to place, from the hem into the woman who had the issue of blood, but by reason of the effect which it produced in the woman. For the virtue abiding in Christ wrought the effect of healing in the woman. Like as, saith Theophylact, the learning of doctors is said to be communicated to their disciples, when, nevertheless, the learning itself remains in the doctors, and produces its effect only, that is, a like knowledge in the disciples.

Observe, this virtue of healing and working miracles conferred by the Word upon the humanity of Christ, was not a physical quality. For that would have been infinite, as having divine and infinite efficacy, of which the humanity of Christ was not capable, being created. But it was a moral quality, that is to say, an instrumental virtue. For the humanity of Christ did these things as an instrument of the divinity.

Who hath touched My garments? Christ asks this question, says Bede, that the healing which He had given to the woman, being declared and made known, might advance in many the virtue of faith, and draw them to believe in Christ.

Ver. 33. *But the woman fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her, came and fell down before Him, and told Him all the truth. Fearing and trembling*, not because she had been guilty of an act of superstition, as Calvin would have it, but because she had approached secretly, and, unclean, had touched Christ the clean, and had, as it were, stolen a gift of healing from Christ without His knowledge. Therefore she was afraid lest Christ should rebuke her, or lest He should recall the benefit, or afflict her with a worse evil. Hence it is plain that she had not perfect faith and hope in Christ, or she would not have thought that she could be hid from Him, nor would she have been afraid of Him. Wherefore Christ said, to reassure her, *Daughter, be of good courage*, as Matthew says.

Ver. 34. *But He said to her, Daughter, thy faint hath made thee whole.* Christ here confirms the healing which had been conferred upon this trembling woman. It was as though He said to her, "Not My mere fringe, which with great faith of obtaining, healing thou hast touched, hath saved thee, but chiefly My omnipotence, but secondarily thine own faith. For this, either as a disposition or a meritorious cause, has delivered thee from the issue of blood, which deliverance I ratify and confirm."

Go in peace. For God dwells in peace, that she may know that she is cleansed from her sins. For whom Christ healed in body, He likewise sanctified in soul.

5. And he was always day and night in the monuments and in the mountains, crying and cutting himself with stones.
6. And seeing Jesus afar off, he ran and adored him.
7. And crying with a loud voice, he said: What have I to do with thee, Jesus the Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God that thou torment me not.
8. For he said unto him: Go out of the man, thou unclean spirit.
9. And he asked him: What is thy name? And he saith to him: My name is Legion, for we are many.
10. And he besought him much, that he would not drive him away out of the country.
11. And there was there near the mountain a great herd of swine, feeding.
12. And the spirits besought him, saying: Send us into the swine, that we may enter into them.
13. And Jesus immediately gave them leave. And the unclean spirits going out, entered into the swine: and the herd with great violence was carried headlong into the sea, being about two thousand, and were stifled in the sea.
14. And they that fed them fled, and told it in the city and in the fields. And they went out to see what was done:
15. And they came to Jesus, and they see him that was troubled with the devil, sitting, clothed, and well in his wits, and they were afraid.
16. And they that had seen it, told them, in what manner he had been dealt with who had the devil; and concerning the swine.
17. And they began to pray him that he would depart from their coasts.
18. And when he went up into the ship, he that had been troubled with the devil, began to beseech him that he might be with him.
19. And he admitted him not, but saith to him: Go into thy house to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had mercy on thee.
20. And he went his way, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him: and all men wondered.
21. And when Jesus had passed again in the ship over the strait, a great multitude assembled together unto him, and he was nigh unto the sea.
22. And there cometh one of the rulers of the synagogue named Jairus: and seeing him, falleth down at his feet.
23. And he besought him much, saying: My daughter is at the point of death, come, lay thy hand upon her, that she may be safe, and may live.
24. And he went with him, and a great multitude followed him, and they thronged him.
25. And a woman who was under an issue of blood twelve years,
26. And had suffered many things from many physicians; and had spent all that she had, and was nothing the better, but rather worse,
27. When she had heard of Jesus, came in the crowd behind him, and touched his garment.
28. For she said: If I shall touch but his garment, I shall be whole.

29. And forthwith the fountain of her blood was dried up, and she felt in her body that she was healed of the evil.

30. And immediately Jesus knowing in himself the virtue that had proceeded from him, turning to the multitude, said: Who hath touched my garments?

31. And his disciples said to him: Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou who hath touched me?

32. And he looked about to see her who had done this.

33. But the woman fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her, came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth.

34. And he said to her: Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole: go in peace, and be thou whole of thy disease.

35. While he was yet speaking, some come from the ruler of the synagogue's house, saying: Thy daughter is dead: why dost thou trouble the master any further?

36. But Jesus having heard the word that was spoken, saith to the ruler of the synagogue: Fear not, only believe.

37. And he admitted not any man to follow him, but Peter, and James, and John the brother of James.

38. And they come to the house of the ruler of the synagogue; and he seeth a tumult, and people weeping and wailing much.

39. And going in, he saith to them: Why make you this ado, and weep? the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth.

40. And they laughed him to scorn. But he having put them all out, taketh the father and the mother of the damsel, and them that were with him, and entereth in where the damsel was lying.

41. And taking the damsel by the hand, he saith to her: Talitha cumi, which is, being interpreted: Damsel (I say to thee) arise.

42. And immediately the damsel rose up, and walked: and she was twelve years old: and they were astonished with a great astonishment.

43. And he charged them strictly that no man should know it: and commanded that something should be given her to eat.

1 Christ delivereth the possessed of the legion of devils, 13 they enter into the swine.
 25 He healeth the woman of the bloody issue, 35 and raiseth from death Jairus his daughter.

Ver. 7. *I adjure thee by God.* Because the devil knew that Christ would grant nothing to his prayers or deserts, he inter-poses the name of God, to which he knew Christ gave the highest reverence. It was as though he said, "I entreat Thee, by the authority of the Divine name, and as far as I can, I constrain Thee, that Thou wilt not cast me out of this body, and banish me to hell." For this was the greatest torment to a demon.

Ver. 9. *My name is Legion; Syriac, our name, &c.,* adding, by way of explanation, *for we are many.* A legion contained properly 6666 soldiers. See what is said in Matt. xxvi. 53. In this place a certain number is put for an uncertain. Observe, the devil is God's ape. Hence he imitates God, who is "the Lord of hosts," that is, of angels. In a

like way the devil calls himself *legion*, because he leads out many companions into line of battle to fight against God and His faithful people. Wherefore we have a right to dread that battle, knowing that their warfare is not with men, but devils, and those many in number, who conspire for their destruction. Therefore they ought to implore the help of God and the holy angels, as Elisha did (2 Kings vi. 17).

Ver. 25. *And a woman which had an issue of blood, &c.* This woman was of Cæsarea Philippi, which was formerly called Dan, and afterwards Paneas. This is the celebrated woman who, being healed by Christ of her issue of blood, erected in memory of so great a benefit that statue to Christ at Cæsarea Philippi from whose base grew an herb which cured all diseases (Eus. *H. E.* vii. 14). Julian the Apostate threw the statue down, and set up one of himself in its place. But this was shivered to pieces by lightning, as S. Jerome testifies, and the Tripartite History (*l. vi. c. 19*). Our innovators, who cast away, burn the relics of the saints, whilst they preserve and venerate the relics of their own leaders, act like Julian the Apostate. For the Zuinglians, or followers of Zuinglius, preserve with great devotion his heart, which was found among the ashes when he was burnt. So says Capito in his Life of Zuinglius.

It is not probable that this woman who had the issue of blood was Martha, the sister of Mary Magdalene, as S. Ambrose thinks (*lib. de Salom. c. v.*). For Martha lived at Bethany, near Jerusalem, not at Cæsarea. The Gospel of Nicodemus says that her name was Veronica, the same who gave Christ a handkerchief to wipe the sweat when He was going to be crucified, and on which He left an impression of His face.

Ver. 28. *For she said, If I shall touch but His garment, I shall be whole.* Matthew (ix. 20), instead of *garment*, has *the hem of His garment*. This *hem* was a fringe of threads attached to the bottom of the robe, of a hyacinth or violet colour, which God commanded the Jews to wear, that it might put them continually in mind of God's precepts and of heaven itself. This Christ wore, according to the law, as a mark that He belonged to the Jewish race and religion.

There is here an example and proof of the use and efficacy of holy relics. For of such a nature was the hem or fringe of Christ which healed her that had the issue of blood. Calvin replies that the woman was superstitious, and that a certain amount of superstition was mingled with what she did. But Christ and Mark refute this; for they ascribe her healing not to superstition, but to her faith, and commend her for it. For in the 30th verse it is said, *And Jesus, immediately knowing in Himself that virtue was gone out from Him (de illo), i.e., from (de) His fringe.* And 34, *Daughter, thy faith hath saved thee, go in peace.* Rightly says S. Hilary, "Like as the Author of nature has given to a magnet the power of attracting iron, so did Christ give to His garment the power of healing her who touched in faith." And if it