

Allow Yourself to Be a Little “Needy”!

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Jesus comes to visit, and we would do well to simply accept His healing touch! I am going to suggest that we might take Simon’s mother-in-law as an outstanding example of how we might respond to these moments of “testing” in our lives.

I know that when I am sick, I try to pretend that I am not! I know from my experience that many of you are the same! We expend an inordinate amount of energy pretending to feel “well,” often pushing ourselves to keep “working through it” as if there was nothing wrong with us at all. Of course, all those around us can see that we are sick and would prefer to keep us at arm’s length. Mostly they hope we will not pass our illness on to them! Have we not all been there?

If we had better sense, we would take to our beds or retreat to our quiet places and allow ourselves to be a little “needy.” We would take whatever time necessary to recuperate and heal, rather than pretend there was nothing wrong with us in the first place. How many stories have we heard (or can be told about us) of people who refused to go to the doctor until they were in much worse shape than when they started out? Can you imagine how much faster we all might heal if we learned to acknowledge our “illnesses” from the outset? Again, imagine how many hearts and souls could be healed more quickly if we would simply acknowledge our “dis-ease” and seek help for our healing! Simon’s mother-in-law, it seems, had the good sense to be “sick” when the healer came to her house! “He approached, grasped her hand, and helped her up.” Would that we had the humility to allow Jesus to do the same for us!

Now let us look at the reaction of this woman of faith once she had been cured. Again, in every version of the story, after she receives the healing she needs, she gets up and she waits on them! What a stunning example of passing on what she, herself, is given! Let’s not miss that in the context of the story, that Jesus is also presented as a little bit “needy!” He has been hard at work – teaching, healing and casting out demons – and he is tired. He, too, needs someone to minister to Him. Simon’s mother-in-law, strengthened by her healing encounter with the Lord Jesus, now becomes the healing that Jesus, himself, needs!

Is this not what all of us wish we could do on a regular basis? To take what healing we need from the Lord and then, made whole, turn and become that instrument of love and healing for others! It seems that all of us must take our turn at infirmity from time to time; however, the blessing is that after we have been made whole, we can, in turn, be an instrument of continued healing for those who need it. What we have received as a gift, we give as a gift!

This coming week, on February 11, we celebrate the World Day of the Sick, which for us coincides with the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes, through whose intercession many have known the healing power of God. On that day we might do well to remember all those who struggle in their need for wholeness and healing: those who have simple illnesses, colds and flu; those who are burdened under the weight of chronic illness; those whose illness is acute and even life threatening; and those who are hospitalized, in nursing homes or shut in their homes. But let us also remember our own need for strength and wholeness in body, mind and spirit. For only the “needy” dare ask for the healing power of Jesus to save them!