

A Short Teaching on Grasp Her Hand - Help Her Up
by Deacon Gerry Palermo

Greetings on the Fifth Sunday of Ordinary Time.

Readings: JB 7:1-4, 6-7; PS 147:1-2, 3-4, 5-6; 1 COR 9:16-19, 22-23; MK 1:29-39

I have been privileged all week this week to preach the Gospel at a Liturgy of the Word with Holy Communion service. Throughout the week the continuous theme comes out clearly each day in the Gospel of Mark that Jesus is attentive to the needs and hopes of women.

On leaving the synagogue Jesus entered the house of Simon and Andrew with James and John. Simon's mother-in-law lay sick with a fever. They immediately told him about her. He approached, grasped her hand, and helped her up. Then the fever left her and she waited on them (Mk 1:29-31).

Since this Gospel is paired with the lamentations of Job: *Job spoke, saying: Is not man's life on earth a drudgery (Jb 7:1)*, we must ask the questions of what makes a woman's life a drudgery. What are the things that weigh her down and she feels a *slave who longs for the shade, a hireling who waits for (her) wages (Jb 7:2)*.

The men of the Church need to be aware of the full and complete needs of the women in their life, home and community. What makes her sick of heart? What makes her body decline in pain? What are her concerns and worries? Why are our eyes not on the wellbeing of women?

Bring the issues to the Church. Women should always express their needs and desires to the Church and men must join their voices to the same chorus. Let it be so these worries find resolution and consolation!

Bring our women to Jesus. Women pray. Men should pray for them. Our constant prayer must be for the health of spirit and body.

We must approach them, grasp them and help them up. Then her fever will be lifted and she will assume her rightful place and places within the Church. And, if, we men are the cause of the pain, amend and ask forgiveness.

So let us preach and drive out the demons throughout the whole of Lake Worth!

Peace be with you.

Deacon Gerry