

13 OTB.18; Wis 1:13-2:24; 2 Cor 8:7-15; Mark 5:21-43 (St. Peter's BPK)

In a Charlie Brown comic strip, Linus is eating a sandwich. He makes this observation: "Hands are fascinating things. I like hands! I think I have nice hands! My hands seem to have a lot of character.

These are hands which may someday accomplish great things....

These are hands which may someday do marvelous works.

They may build mighty bridges or heal the sick, or hit home-runs,

or write soul-stirring novels!

These are hands which may someday change the course of human destiny!"

Looking at Linus' hands, Lucy says, "They've got jelly on them."

But Linus is proud of his jelly-covered hands.

(Source: esermnons.com)

You know *the Christian God is not the God of Deism* (Jefferson & Dawkins) – create & run for the Hills! Our God is “hands-on”- The INCARNATION, *God is with us ... Jesus of Nazareth! And Jesus doesn't mind getting messy!*

Even Great Hands Get Messy!

God wants so much more for us. God wants prayer to be a time when we have a personal encounter. Just look at the story of the hemorrhaging woman afflicted for **12 years**. It wasn't enough that she pushed through the crowds & touched Jesus.

Jesus wanted to touch her life!

Jesus wanted to look into her eyes (***Who has touched my clothes?***).

Jesus wanted to personally assure that her faith & trust in him really did save her, ***“Daughter, your faith has saved you. Go in peace & be cured of your affliction.”***

In a sense, Jesus was just as persistent as this woman was - *I can just see Jesus helping her up*, his hands open ready to receive her & her messy life (she was considered unclean, cursed by God for her affliction)

It didn't matter that he was on his way to heal someone's child. *He still took the time* to reach out to this lonely, desperate woman because she mattered to him just as much as the important, influential synagogue official, Jairus.

Jairus, likewise, trusted in Jesus.

Jairus was confident that Jesus would care about his little girl – *He took the child by the hand and said to her, “Talitha koum,” which means, “Little lamb, arise!”* Can you hear the tenderness? **Jesus, God Incarnate**, wants to give life in abundance. The Greek verb used is *egeirein* (*arise*), used for the Resurrection of Jesus. **God intends a great & wonderful future for us.**

And notice this caring & so human touch,

He said she should be given something to eat. Boy, does Jesus know kids!

Great hands don't mind getting messy!

God wants personal contact with us. It is not enough for Jesus to dispense

healing & grace like an impersonal machine! Jesus/God wants:

2 to SEE us, to TOUCH us, and ASSURE us of divine love for us.

We don't have to lower our expectations *or* reduce the Christian life to a matter of formulas & contracts. We were made for communion with God –

& Jesus longs for this human-divine reality to begin in our lives today.

It happens in the most unexpected ways...observe

A business executive became depressed. Things were not going well at work, and he was bringing his problems home with him every night. Every evening he would eat his dinner in silence, shutting out his wife and 5 y.o. daughter. Then he would go into the den & read the paper using the newspaper to wall his family out of his life. After several nights of this, one evening his daughter took her little hand & pushed the newspaper down. She then jumped into her father's lap, wrapped her arms around his neck & hugged him strongly.

The father said abruptly, **“Honey, you are hugging me to death!”**

“No, Daddy,” the little girl said, “I’m hugging you to life!”

This was the greatness of Jesus...

Love Has the Power to Heal.

Love Has the Power to Reconcile.

Love Has the Power to Redeem. (Source: eSermons.com)

Are you like that little girl hugging people **into** life?

Are your hands the “messy hands” of God?

The late Henri Nouwen once observed we heal others through our own woundedness – because we know what it’s like. There is great Power in our wounds – don’t dismiss your own suffering & messy experiences.

That is where compassion begins

Compassion is not pity. Pity lets us stay at a distance. It is condescending.

Compassion is not sympathy. Sympathy is for superiors over inferiors.

Compassion is born of God. It means entering into the other person’s problems.

It means taking on the burdens of the other. It means standing in the other person’s shoes. Our wounds, touched by God, become the wounds of Christ, healing & reaching out to those around us.

Our own “jelly-covered” hands can change a person’s, no,... a world’s future!

At this Liturgy push through whatever objections may rise up, and grab hold of his robe. Then don’t be surprised if you find Jesus looking straight at you with love.

Jesus breaks down the barriers – sickness, sin, gender, nationality, even death itself. **Break down walls & build bridges as Pope Francis says!**

Here comes fullness of life with each other & God

... messy hands and all!

(Sources: *The Word Among Us*, 6/12)