



February 5, 2012
Fifth Sunday of Ordinary Time
*"...He approached, grasped her hand, and helped her up."
—Mark 29:31*

Dear Friends;

Let me ask you a question... what kind of friend are you? Are you like Job's friends or are you like Simon's friend?

Job a wealthy, upright man "who feared God and turned away from evil." lost his fortune, his children, and his health. Job's 3 good friends – Eliphaz, Bildad & Zophar "... met together to go and console and comfort him." But after just one of Job's friends "consoles" him Job responds "Remember that my life is like the wind; I shall not see happiness again."

On the other hand Simon's friend Jesus, on hearing that Simon's mother in-law was sick "...approached, grasped her hand, and helped her up." No lengthy speeches, no judgments, no chastisements, just presence, touch and help. At Jesus' touch "...the fever left her and she waited on them."

What a difference in responses! Job seems to be depressed and wallowing in self pity and Simon's mother in-law begins to take care of others.

Given the choice I think we would want to be a friend like Jesus and have friends like him! But not being perfect people we might be more like Job's friends. In Matthew 5:48 we read to "be perfects as your heavenly father is perfect" so now what?

Other translations of Matthew 5:48 read "be complete in showing love as God shows love" or "live generously and graciously towards others, the way God lives towards you." That seems much more doable then being "perfect."

Isn't it wonderful that we have a God who says to us be loving, be generous, be gracious, feed the hungry, heal the sick, free the captives, love the unlovable and then comes and shows us how to do it! And it as easy as approaching, touching and helping others up...

At times we tend to make our faith journey much harder than it has to be. We try to follow all the rules and lets face it Catholics have a lot of them. But for Jesus the rules do not seem to be as important as the people.

So the next time you are berating yourself or someone else for not "being perfect" stop and take a moment to let Jesus approach, grasp your hand and help you up.

Peace,
Lisa