

Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time Sunday, July 1, 2018

Grace Hopper was an American Computer Scientist and a pioneer to computer programming. She led a team to develop a compiler that was the precursor to the once popular COBOL computer language. Later in life, she also became a rear admiral in the U.S. Navy. Because of her many accomplishments, she was known as "Amazing Grace" by many of her colleagues. Grace Hopper is the person accredited for the following infamous quote:

"It is often easier to ask for forgiveness than to ask for permission."

- Grace Hopper

This particular quote came to mind for today's Gospel because we see both examples, one of forgiveness and one of permission, presented together.

Our "permission" example is Jarius, a synagogue official, who upon seeing Jesus, falls at his feet and pleads earnestly with him. We see Jarius seek Jesus' permission, asking Jesus to, "Come lay your hands on [my daughter] that she may get well and live." Jarius' faith is expressed through a verbal request made to Jesus that he will heal his daughter. This request is reinforced by Jesus' response, "Do not be afraid; just have *faith*." Although they then receive word that the little girl had suddenly passed, Jesus is not deterred. Jesus raises the little girl back to life, showing that even something as finite as death, is no obstacle for the power of God.

Included in this Gospel, is also a "forgiveness" example; a woman who had been suffering from hemorrhages for twelve years. Unlike Jarius, who fell at the feet of Jesus making a request to be relieved of his affliction, the woman's is an inward expression of faith; her belief that she will be healed, "if only I can touch His clothes." Believing that she will be healed by simply touching his clothes serves as a testimony to the fidelity of her inner faith. Although others in the crowd touched Jesus, it is this woman's "touch of faith" that unleashes the healing power of God. When Jesus pauses and demands to know who it is that "touched me", the trembling woman comes forward, explaining her action to Him.

Although Grace Hopper's quotation seems to emphasize a preference for taking action over seeking permission, our Gospel today reminds us that such a principle has no place in the kingdom of heaven. Whether we seek His forgiveness or His permission, the healing presence of God shows no partiality. Rather, it is to *any* act of faith that he responds; bestowing his grace on anyone wishing to receive it. May we heed His words in the Gospel today, that we simply, "just have faith".

Deacon Greg Maynerich