

About fifteen years ago, I took up rock climbing. It's not something I continued doing for very long ... but for about six months, I was a very avid rock climber ... and at least once a week I went rock climbing with people from where I worked.

There are two key things to successful rock climbing: the first is that you have to be willing to let go to reach beyond where you are; and the second is that you have to trust the person holding the safety rope.

If you won't let go, you're stuck where you are; and if you don't trust your safety person, you probably shouldn't even get off the first step.

In today's Gospel, we hear of two miracles. The first being a woman who, in a crowd, reaches out to touch Jesus' cloak. She reaches out in faith, and receives a physical cure. And the second miracle is the raising of a young girl. An official of the local synagogue reaches out to Jesus and asks him to help his young daughter.

In both of these situations, there is a risk.

The woman's disease makes her "unclean" according to the Hebrew Law. And in touching another person, she in turn would them "unclean." Yet, in touching Jesus, she is cured, and in being cured is made ritually clean.

The official, in reaching out to Jesus, lends credibility to Jesus' ministry – something that many in the synagogue didn't want to see happen. He was risking his reputation among the other religious officials, and in taking that risk sees his daughter raised from the dead.

In both of these situations, the individuals had to risk losing something in order to gain something. They both risked their reputations ... their social status, in order to reach out to Jesus. They let go of social norms ... they reached beyond their social morés to connect with the Son of God ... and one received healing, and the other received life.

In this is a lesson for us, too. Jesus Christ is alive, and comes to us today under the appearances of bread and wine. Sometimes, we take for granted Who it is that we are receiving. Yet in the Blessed Sacrament, Jesus offers us not only Himself, but also both healing and life.

So let us make an effort today, as we make our final preparations to receive Him at this altar ... to recognize Who it is that we are receiving. Jesus says in Scripture, "I have come that they may have life and have it in abundance." So let us reach beyond our normal expectations ... let us reach out in Faith and ask for this abundance ... an abundance of healing and an abundance of life.

God is here ... Jesus Christ is here ... Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity ... reach out in Faith, take the risk ... and receive ... in abundance ... the graces poured out from God, through Christ, in the Holy Spirit.