

Ordinary Time

February 8, 2015 ♦ Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Christ helps us find wholeness no matter what we suffer—and in him we find our peace and our joy.

Illness, depression, and misfortune can make us feel alone and afraid. We wonder whether anyone can understand what we're going through or help us.

The first five chapters of Mark's Gospel give us several healing stories in which Jesus, by touch or word, restores individuals to wholeness. He casts out demons, as we heard last week. He cures the sick, like Simon's mother-in-law. The stories confirm what our faith tells us—that God's healing power is for all people and that Good News lifts us and gives us joy.

But for those touched by the loneliness of infirmity of mind, body, or spirit, the stories alone might not be enough. Instead, the fervent prayer of the psalmist might be our grace: "The LORD...[heals] the broken-hearted" (Psalm 147:2–3). Or, our peace

might rest in the simple knowledge of two often overlooked lines in the Gospel: "They brought him many who were possessed by demons" (Mark 8:16) and "The whole town was gathered at the door" (Mark 1:33).

Simply put, everyone came, and no one was alone. No matter *what* our condition, we are not alone. Christ is there in our pain and suffering to give us the grace to endure. We're not always cured by human standards, but Christ helps us find wholeness no matter what we suffer—and in him we find our peace and our joy.

Isaiah told us that the name given to the Messiah was *Emmanuel*, which means "God with us."

In Christ, we see the evidence that God's promise has come true.

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Today's Readings

- Jb 7:1–4, 6–7
1 Cor 9:16–19, 22–23
Mk 1:29–39



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