

## Father Dave's Homily

07/01/12 ..... 13 B

-- This past December, I came into the funeral home for my brother-in-law. His parents were up front, and I could see this vacant look in their eyes. They were devastated.

-- My brother-in-law was 52 years old when he died. Still, no parent wants to live to see their child's death, at whatever age. Multiply that feeling many times over when parents lose a child before adulthood. I've been to far too many funerals where that was the case.

-- And I know that some of you have had that horrible experience. You can relate better than I can to Jairus' feeling as he approached Jesus in a last-ditch attempt to save his 12 year old daughter. It was his final chance, and he had to act quickly.

-- Jesus responded to him, but along the way, he was interrupted by the need of another woman in different circumstances. She'd been sick as long as the synagogue official's daughter had been alive.

-- I wonder how Jairus felt when Jesus paused to talk to her. He had to wait. Some of you have had to wait for a doctor's diagnosis, or for tests to come back from the lab. The results may well determine your fate permanently.

-- It's a terrible waiting time. Tom Petty had a song some 20 years ago called *The Waiting is the Hardest Part*. I'd bet there was more than a little impatience brewing in Jairus while he was waiting for Jesus.

-- And when word reached him that his daughter had died, I'm sure he experienced devastation and some anger. But Jesus did not give up hope.

-- He came to the house and touched the girl by the hand. And, in one of the few places in scripture that we hear Jesus' native language Aramaic, he bids the little girl to get up. And so she does. She is restored, right at the point in life when she is about to become a woman.

-- Jesus healed her, and he cured the woman who touched his cloak, so her ability to have a child could return. Both were able to return to their families and community.

-- Still, where Jesus lived many other children would continue to die before adulthood, and Jesus could not save them all. Other women would have their female problems left unattended by doctors or popular healers. Many others would suffer with their prayers seemingly unanswered.

-- So, too, even in our own day, many people pray for cures to various illnesses. Some prayers seem to work, but others seem to go unanswered. And it's not always the most sincere or most devout who appear to get the answers they want.

-- Jesus isn't the bailout from all our human problems, challenges or even the diseases that plague us. But Jesus fights with us. For, as our first reading says, God did not make death. It is a result of evil, of Satan and the forces of evil.

-- Of course, we know that death will remain a part of our world as long as we inhabit this earth. Eventually, that girl Jesus raised back to life died herself. And so will we.

-- But God walks with us in our sufferings, both physical and spiritual. Jesus touches us with his healing power as he did both women in our gospel.

-- May we rely upon the healing power of the Lord to sustain us in whatever physical, spiritual or psychological challenges that come our way. Jesus is on our side.