



Mark 5:25-34

25 And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years. 26 She had suffered a great deal under the care of many doctors and had spent all she had, yet instead of getting better she grew worse. 27 When she heard about Jesus, she came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, 28 because she thought, “If I just touch his clothes, I will be healed.” 29 Immediately her bleeding stopped and she felt in her body that she was freed from her suffering.

30 At once Jesus realized that power had gone out from him. He turned around in the crowd and asked, “Who touched my clothes?”

31 “You see the people crowding against you,” his disciples answered, “and yet you can ask, ‘Who touched me?’”

32 But Jesus kept looking around to see who had done it. 33 Then the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell at his feet and, trembling with fear, told him the whole truth. 34 He said to her, “Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering.”

[LENTEN PRAYER GUIDE: WEEK 2]

In Gemena, Democratic Republic of the Congo, children are stalked by diseases. Poor nutrition leaves them weak and prone to infections. Poverty and lack of transportation keep parents from taking their children to distant clinics to seek care. Healthcare providers are few and medicines scarce.

About one in six children in the DRC dies before reaching their fifth birthday. A woman’s lifetime risk of maternal death is 1 in 24. Life expectancy in the nation is 48 years.

Our loving Father, who knows when even a sparrow falls, give Your children in the DRC access to caregivers and medicines that can save lives. Give mothers the knowledge and resources they need to bear healthy children and rear them.

Children in Gemena, DRC, are especially vulnerable to diseases they can catch from the surface water they drink or bathe in. Mosquitoes that carry malaria breed in these pools. And cholera, typhoid, Hepatitis A, and other diseases take many lives each year, most of them children.

Dear Lord, we mourn the lives lost in the Congo because of unsafe water and because of disease-carrying mosquitoes that breed in stagnant pools. Give courage to those who work to treat and prevent waterborne diseases in the Congo.

Roughly one-third of children in the DRC do not receive all the vaccinations they need to prevent childhood diseases such as measles, polio, and diphtheria. More than 40 percent of children suffer moderate or severe stunting, a sign of chronic poor nutrition. Others lack low-cost treatments for disease like Vitamin A supplements and deworming medicine.

Gracious Savior, teach us to care for children in the DRC as you do. We ask Your blessings on those who work to bring good healthcare to the Congo so that children there may grow in grace and enjoy a long life on the earth.