

## Prayer and reflection resource

### Week 4 | “Wilderness in the Everyday”

Our reflections this week draw on the stories of the Gerasene demoniac and the woman suffering from unstoppable bleeding, which can be found in Luke 8: 26-48.

Which of the two stories speaks most to you?

This week we have two images of the story in which Jesus heals the bleeding woman.

The first (below), painted by Chilean artist Daniel Cariola, is taken from the ‘Encounter’ chapel at ‘Duc in Altum’ on the shores of Lake Galilee. It is large and takes up most of one wall.



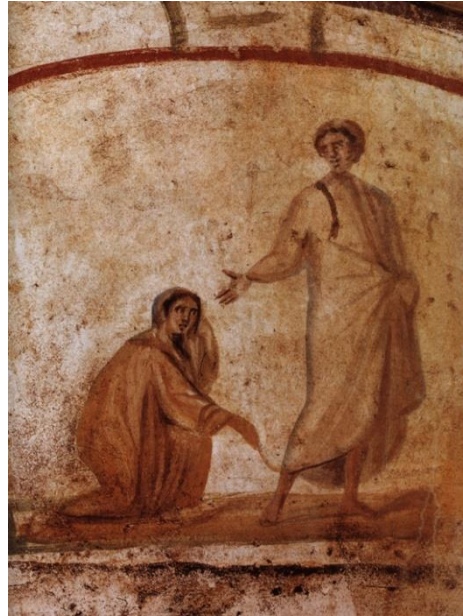
We see only the sandalled feet of those present. Just to the right of center, with toes pointing straight at the viewer, is the foot of Jesus. To the left, another pair of sandalled feet mask most of the arm of the woman who is reaching through at ankle level. Where her outstretched finger meets Jesus’ robe is a point of light. From certain viewing angles in the chapel it seems as though Jesus is actually standing on the altar.

You can [explore the artwork in its setting within the Duc In Altum chapel by following this link](#). Scroll down the page and click on “Encounter chapel” and then on the image for further views of it.

The second image (right) is very different.

It comes from [the Catacombs of Marcellinus and Peter in Rome](#) and dates to the 4<sup>th</sup> century.

There are no crowds in this image and no background. It depicts only Jesus on the right, half turning to look back and hold his arm out to the woman who kneels on the left, her arm outstretched towards his robe.



Which of these two images do you feel better captures the sense of both wilderness and the woman's isolation?

## Reflections

As you go through the week, notice where you feel part of a community. Who else is with you and what makes it a community? Who is excluded? Whom might you be called to bring in?

Are there also times where you feel on the margins of someone else's community? What might it be like to be included?

There are, of course, many other gospel stories of people being drawn back from the wilderness of isolation into society and community. Not all of them involve physical healing. You might to look at one or more of the following and see how it speaks to you. How might you put this gospel imperative of creating God's community into practice in your life?

- Mark 1: 40 – 45 Jesus heals a man with leprosy
- Mark 10: 46 – 52 Jesus heals Bartimaeus
- John 5: 1-9 Healing at the pool of Bethesda
- Luke 19: 1-10 The story of Zacchaeus

- Mark 2: 13 – 17 Jesus calls and eats with tax collectors