

## ***LAST BUT NOT LEAST***

***Editor***

### *The amazing art of touching*

Jesus was an outstanding artist who performed and perfected an amazing art: *the art of touching!* All through his life we see him performing this noble, life-transforming art (Mt 8:3; 8:15; 17:7; 20:34; Mk 1:41; Lk 22:51). Whomever he touched; changed both physically and spiritually. The magical touch of Midas could only change his vivacious daughter into a lifeless golden statue, whereas the miraculous touch of Jesus could bring a girl back to life from her deathbed. The power of his touch, the energy it emanated, and the telling effect it had on those who were fortunate to be touched by Jesus, were incredible.

Though touch has great potential and is the first, the last and the most important sense faculty we possess, it is the least explored and utilized treasure we possess. It is very gentle, humble, soft and tender. To touch, one does not require much energy. Even a new born child is fully capable of touching others. But, as human beings grow up, they progressively abandon or forget this miraculous power they possess and take recourse to other rude and violent forms of tactile practices like pressing, pushing, pinching, and even punching, though those are comparatively less productive and causing pain. Things that are gladly made available by virtue of a soft, gentle touch, a violent punch can never ever dream of extracting.

Jesus not only performed the therapeutic art of touching, he admired and positively responded to those who practiced it. It's an undeniable fact that among human beings women are more specialized in this astounding art of touching than their male counterparts. When a woman touched Jesus from behind, he immediately sensed it and positively responded to it (Mk 5:27-31). There was the crowd pressing and pushing him around, but none of them managed to extract any healing from him. But the timid, soft touch of a sickly woman from behind, that too on the brim of his cloak, extracted the healing power, which all that pressing and pushing of the crowd could not!

Many cultures shun and teach people to recoil from all sorts of body contacts. As a result, the natural craving to be touched and to touch comes out in numerous hypocritical and concealed forms, some even in pious and religious habits! Yet, among them sexual violence is the worst. Most problems can be solved and many sicknesses cured with a gentle loving touch. Jesus was an expert, a physician par excellence, who dared to practice this traditional alternative medicine. It's yet to be seen whether humanity would ever dare to remove its masks and take gloves off to perform this gentle art, practiced and perfected by Jesus: *the amazing art of touching!*