

February 19, 2012 Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

Call to prayer: Lord Jesus Christ, you came to free us from all that keeps us from walking in the ways of God. Open our hearts to hear your word, calling us to rise and follow you, who live and reign now and forever, Amen.

A reading from the holy gospel according to Mark 2:1-12

When Jesus returned to Capernaum after some days, it became known that he was at home.

Many gathered together so that there was no longer room for them, not even around the door, and he preached the word to them.

They came bringing to him a paralytic carried by four men.

Unable to get near Jesus because of the crowd, they opened up the roof above him.

After they had broken through, they let down the mat on which the paralytic was lying.

When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic,

“Child, your sins are forgiven.”

Now some of the scribes were sitting there asking themselves,

“Why does this man speak that way? He is blaspheming. Who but God alone can forgive sins?”

Jesus immediately knew in his mind what they were thinking to themselves,

so he said, “Why are you thinking such things in your hearts?”

Which is easier, to say to the paralytic,

‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Rise, pick up your mat and walk?’

But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority to forgive sins on earth”

—he said to the paralytic, “I say to you, rise, pick up your mat, and go home.”

He rose, picked up his mat at once, and went away in the sight of everyone.

They were all astounded and glorified God, saying, “We have never seen anything like this.”

The gospel of Our Lord

Focus: This is a story of healing and forgiveness. The physical cure gave public evidence of the power of Jesus over the forces of evil, both illness and sin.

Questions for reflection and sharing:

1. What words or phrases stand out for you or linger in your heart?
2. Can you think of a time when you helped someone in difficulty? How does that compare to “making a hole in the roof?”
3. How does the power of physical healing relate to the sometimes overwhelming feeling of being forgiven?
4. Is the sacrament of reconciliation about joy for you? Is being forgiven a joyful experience?

For what or whom shall we pray?

Concluding prayer: All forgiving God, help us to experience and feel deeply the joy of your continual forgiveness, mercy and love for us. We ask this through Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit. Amen.