

Friday 1st week

Gospel text (Mk 2,1-12): Jesus returned to Capernaum. As the news spread that he was at home, so many people gathered that there was no longer room even outside the door.

While Jesus was preaching the Word to them, some people brought a paralyzed man to him. The four men who carried him couldn't get near Jesus because of the crowd, so they opened the roof above the room where Jesus was and, through the hole, lowered the man on his mat. When Jesus saw the faith of these people, he said to the paralytic, «My son, your sins are forgiven».

Now, some teachers of the Law who were sitting there wondered within themselves, «How can he speak like this insulting God? Who can forgive sins except God?».

At once Jesus knew through his spirit what they were thinking and asked, «Why do you wonder? Is it easier to say to this paralyzed man: ‘Your sins are forgiven’, or to say: ‘Rise, take up your mat and walk?’ But now you shall know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins». And he said to the paralytic, «Stand up, take up your mat and go home».

The man rose and, in the sight of all those people, he took up his mat and went out. All of them were astonished and praised God saying, «We have never seen anything like this!».

«My son, your sins are forgiven’ (...). ‘Stand up, take up your mat and go home’»

Fr. Joan Carles MONTSERRAT i Pulido

Today, we see the Lord surrounded once more by crowds: «so many people gathered that there was no longer room even outside the door» (Mk 2:2). His heart is melted by people's needs and makes him to bestow upon them as much relief as possible; by forgiving, teaching and healing them at the same time. He certainly offers them physical help (as in today's parable, by curing the paralytic), but —actually— He is intent on getting the very best for each one of us: the well-being of our soul.

Jesus, our Savior, wants to give us a true hope of salvation. He even forgives our sins and sympathizes with our moral feebleness. Before anything else, He most emphatically says: «My son, your sins are forgiven» (Mk 2:5). Later on, we are given to see him connecting the remission of our sins —which He generously and tirelessly grants— to a most extraordinary miracle, seen by our very eyes. As some kind of external guarantee, as if to help us to open our eyes to faith, after forgiving the paralytic's sins, He cures him of his paralysis: «Stand up, take up your mat and go home. The man rose and, in the sight of all those people, he took up his mat and went out» (Mk 2:11-12).

We can revive this miracle quite often through Confession. With the words of forgiveness said by the minister of God («I absolve you from your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit») Jesus —discreetly— accords us once more the external guarantee of remission of our sins, guarantee that is tantamount to the spectacular cure of the paralytic of Capernaum.

We are now beginning a new ordinary time. And, we believers are now reminded of the urgent need we have of a sincere and personal encounter with Jesus Christ, the All-Merciful Lord. In this liturgical time, He urges us not to slacken our pace nor to neglect the necessary forgiveness He offers all of us in his dwelling, the Church.